The period covered by this report is
the week of September 2 through September 8,
except where otherwise specifically stated

9·11·42

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

TRENDS IN AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION SINCE PEARL HARBOR

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The Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of War Information uses a variety of procedures and techniques to obtain its data on the attitudes of people and on what is brought to their attention. These procedures and techniques have been found reliable after extensive experimentation over a period of years.

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INTRODUCTION

"Above all, the executive official knows that a policy which does not conform to the will of the people affected creates overwhelming difficulties in its administration. Real efficiency comes not only from good organization and smooth procedures but also to an even greater extent from the willingness of the citizens to accept the policy and to share in its administration."

Henry A. Wallace and James L. McCamy,
Public Opinion Quarterly, June 1940.

Nine months have passed since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. As the war has progressed, bringing with it the necessity for making quick and drastic policy decisions, one of the big problems facing government officials has been to understand the public mind. As Vice President Henry Wallace has pointed out, public acceptance of policy is vital to swift and effective administration. Even more important, high public morale is a crucial factor in any war effort, and of inestimable military value.

For the first time in history systematic gauging of the public reactions to policies and events has been possible during war-time. To provide such information, the Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of War Information has, since the outbreak of war, made polls of opinion among cross-sections of the people. It has studied their views on a wide range of military, economic and other domestic matters.

On many of the most important issues, repeated soundings have been taken at periodic intervals. They reveal a pattern of American thought developing under the hammer blows of historic military and political events, reacting to drastic changes in our domestic life. Certain long-term trend questions used by Dr. Hadley Cantril of the Office of Public Opinion Research, Princeton University, have also contributed to this analysis of U. S. attitudes since Pearl Harbor.*

While in no sense a complete profile of sentiment in this country toward the myriad problems of the past few months, the trends shown here do present a picture of developing opinion on many of the larger war issues. And such a guide serves to bring into focus the important motivations that affect American views, while offering some guide to the directions public opinion will take in the months ahead.

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*The results of these questions are property of Office of Public Opinion Research and have been made available to OWI for administrative use only. They are not to be quoted or published in any way without the permission of OPOR.

SUMMARY

In the nine months since Pearl Harbor, American opinion has been extremely responsive to news from the fighting fronts, and on many issues has fluctuated sharply with the military reports of the moment. There are some encouraging signs that public attitudes have gravitated toward a more realistic view of the war, although soft spots in the people's thinking are still apparent.

For example, people have demanded concentration of our efforts against that member of the Axis which is on the attack. Last spring they wanted to hit hardest at Japan. But the summer campaign brought back into better perspective the menace of Nazi power. And Americans are now convinced that we should turn most of our strength on Germany.

Opinion on length of the war shows that Americans went through a period of pessimism after the fall of Singapore, but their spirits rose very high in early June after the Coral Sea and Midway battles and the Cologne bombing, only to fall when news of summer reverses poured in. Although the present trend is toward a soberer and more realistic view of the situation, there is still a great deal of optimistic insistence that this war will be a relatively short one.

Despite ups and downs of opinion regarding the length of the war, however, there has been relatively little variation from the steadfast majority conviction that we will both win and dictate the peace. At times this confidence has raised a presumption of complacency on the part of a large part of the population.

Public appraisal of the progress of production has tended to grow more critical in recent weeks. Bad news this summer from both the battle and factory fronts evoked attitudes which sent satisfaction with production tumbling downward.

This same growing disapprobation has been registered toward the overall war effort of the nation. A majority have always said this country "is doing all it possibly can to win the war", but this majority dropped from 81 per cent in June to 61 per cent in July. It is notable that while this trend was accompanied by declining satisfaction with British effort, over the same period of time there was rising recognition of Russia as the country trying hardest to win the war.

Perhaps most encouraging of all the developments in American thinking since the outbreak of war is the strengthening American unity with our Allies. This comes out in the overwhelming belief that we cannot win this war alone, and in the demand for a second front, in the belief that we should continue to send lend-lease supplies abroad.

Closely related to these opinions is the strong sentiment for sending our forces abroad to fight the enemy wherever he may be instead of keeping them at home. Also significant are the many evidences that Americans want this country to take a more active role in international affairs after the war.

Nevertheless, Americans have not accepted the motives and fighting contributions of these countries without serious reservations. They have criticized our main Allies — England and Russia — on different grounds. While Americans take their hats off to Russia's fighting contribution, a great many of them continue to suspect that she may make a separate peace with Hitler, or that she will not cooperate with us after the war.

The American estimate of England is exactly the reverse. Confidence in her determination not to negotiate a separate peace with Germany and in her willingness to cooperate with us after the war is very high. But her contribution in battle is discounted, and a third of the people think she will let us do her fighting.

China appears to be taken for granted. Confidence in her continued resistance and her desire to work with us has always been very high, but she is given little recognition for her part in the fighting.

Finally, there is little disposition on the part of the American public to accept a negotiated peace on any terms which would leave the Axis with its winnings to date. It should be borne in mind, however, that this peace sentiment has been measured at a time when the average American has felt the impact of war very little, when United States casualties have been relatively light, and while confidence in victory has remained constantly high.

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear from the evidence presented here that the American public has been moving steadily toward a more sober view of the war. The fact that many opinions fluctuate so sharply in response to news of the moment indicates, however, that a completely realistic evaluation has not yet been attained. Also, there are many factors which are constantly turning the people's thinking down blind alleys. These include traditional prejudices against our Allies, a lack of a complete understanding of the implications of global war, and cocksureness arising out of the fact that the United States has never been defeated. There remains an informational task of strengthening the realization that in more complete union with our Allies there is strength, and in countering the dangerous assumption that because our ancestors have never lost a war victory in this one is assured.

(9-11-42)

FOREIGN TIME TABLE

Date	Event
Dec. 7	Pearl Harbor
Dec. 25	Fall of Hongkong
Dec. 31	Russians recapture Kerch
Jan. 2	Fall of Manila
Jan. 2	United Nations Declaration
Jan. 20	Russians take Mozhaisk
Jan. 23	Battle of Macassar Straits
Feb. 15	Fall of Singapore
Feb. 25	Staraya Russa surrounded by Russians
Mar. 9	Fall of Java
Mar. 17	Appointment of MacArthur
Apr. 8	General Marshall in London for conferences
Apr. 9	Fall of Bataan
Apr. 17	Bombing of Tokyo
Apr. 26	Hitler's speech requesting additional power to stamp out treason, sabotage, etc.
May 4	Beginning of Coral Sea Battle
May 5	Announcement of Madagascar attack
May 5	Russians attack Kharkov (Note: Russians were advancing until May 10 or 15th)
May 6	Fall of Corregidor
May 12	Germans launch Kerch offensive
May 19	Germans claim Kerch occupied
May 28	Heydrich wounded
May 28	General Arnold and General Somervell in London
May 31	1000-plane attack by RAF on Cologne
June 4	Beginning of Midway Battle
June 4	Aleutian landing
June 10	German offensive around Kharkov beginning
June 10	Razing of Lidice
June 12	Molotoff's visit announced
June 13	A.E.F. landing in Ireland announced
June 22	Fall of Tobruk
June 26	Eisenhower named Chief of United States operations in Europe
July 1	British stand at El Alamein
July 4	Sevastopol falls
July 8	Germans reach Voronezh
July 28	Announcement of fall of Rostov
Aug. 7	United States-Australian offensive against Solomons announcement
Aug. 8	Arrest of Gandhi
Aug. 17	Churchill-Stalin conference announced
Aug. 19	Raid on Dieppe
Aug. 22	Brazil declares war on Germany
Aug. 23	Large convoy of A.E.F. arrives in Ireland
Aug. 23	Nazis cross Don River elbow
Aug. 26	Japs attack Milne Bay
Aug. 30	Jap defeat at Milne Bay announced
Aug. 30	Grew's speech on Japan
Sept. 1	Rommel launches offensive at British Egyptian line
Sept. 7	Complete repulse of Rommel announced

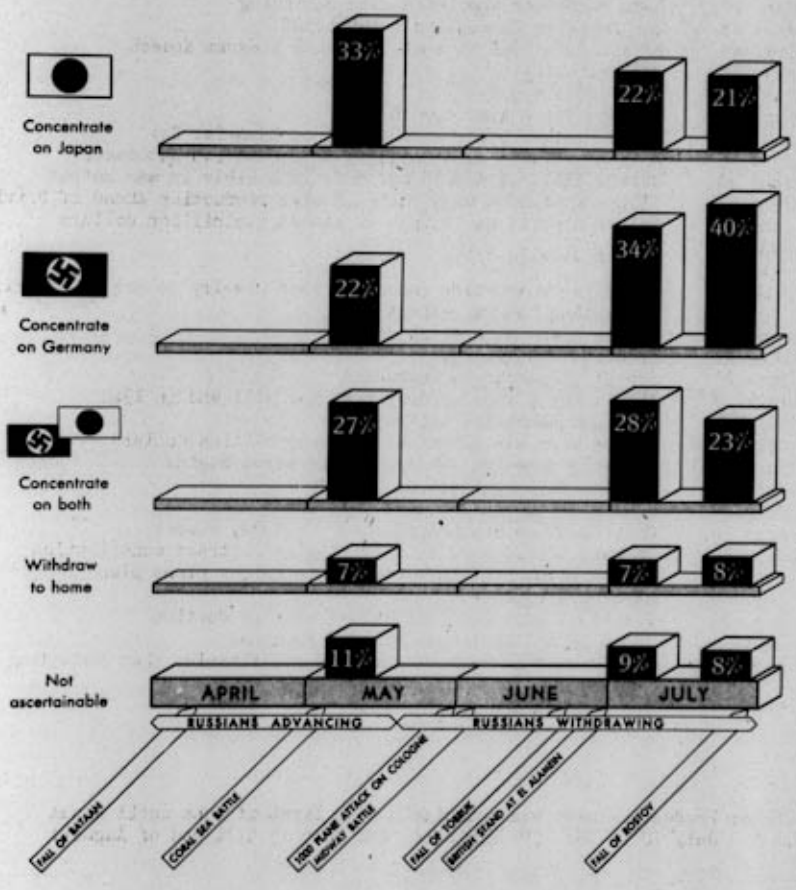
DOMESTIC TIME TABLE

Date	Event
Jan. 12	W.L.B. created
Jan. 13	Donald Nelson appointed Chief of Production
Jan. 27	Leon Henderson appointed over rationing
Apr. 18	War Manpower Commission established
Apr. 28	President's 7-point anti-inflation program speech
May 15	Gas rationing
May 18	Price ceilings
May 18	Wallace Peace Aims speech
May 30	Sumner Welles peace aims speech on Memorial Day
June 7	Nelson acclaims auto industry as production pacemaker
June 10	Nelson declares nation has done impossible in war output
June 11	Oliver Lyttleton says United States production ahead of British
June 16	Nelson reports war output at almost two billion dollars
June 16) July 10)	Rubber salvage drive
June 26	New York Times story reporting that rivalry to secure materials thwarting the war effort
June 26	Nelson plans more scrap drives
June 27	Production Communique
June 28	Arrest of saboteurs announced
July 9	Andrew May's announcement that war will end in 1942
July 9	Trial of saboteurs begins
July 11	Nelson says war output to be forty billion dollars
July 14	Non-stop campaign for collecting scrap begins
July 18	Higgins ship contract cancelled
July 23	Meat shortage in the East reported
July 24	Chief Justice Stone appointed to survey rubber
July 24	Rayburn blocks move to stay Higgins contract cancellation
Aug. 1	Nelson gives tentative backing to Kaiser plane plan
Aug. 8	Saboteurs executed
Aug. 20	President says he's not "blue" over production
Sept. 1	Announcement that meat will be rationed
Sept. 7	President's message to Congress and fireside chat demanding anti-inflation legislation
Sept. 7	One hundred and seventy-four ships launched.

Note: Production news was optimistic from first of June until about July 10 to 15. (Pessimistic from July 15 till end of August)

CHART I

SHOULD WE NOW CONCENTRATE ON GERMANY OR JAPAN?



TRENDS IN AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION SINCE PEARL HARBOR

Military events since the outbreak of war have had an enormous impact on the thinking of the American public. Since December 7th the people have fixed a good share of their attention on the changing fortunes of war. Their hopes and fears regarding the length and outcome of the war, their urge to concentrate our energies on Germany or Japan, their approval of the efforts of our Allies, even their satisfaction with war measures here at home -- all have risen and fallen sharply with the shifting fields of battle all over the world.

CONCENTRATION OF EFFORT

One of the clearest reflections of the sensitivity of opinion to military events shows up in the public's view of where we should concentrate our fighting efforts.

> The people have tended to demand strongest action against that member of the Axis which is on the attack.

Last spring when Japan was on the march through the Southwest Pacific, the public said, "Concentrate on Japan". The German summer campaigns and the Russian reverses have brought people's attention sharply back to Europe. "Hit Germany," they are demanding, as a large section of the public clamors for a second front. (Chart I) But a strong resumption of the Japanese offensive may once again turn sentiment back toward a concentration in the Orient and away from the ultimate menace of Nazism. If this should happen while the threat of Germany remains great, it might well indicate a need for a greater information effort to clarify for Americans the full meanings of global warfare.

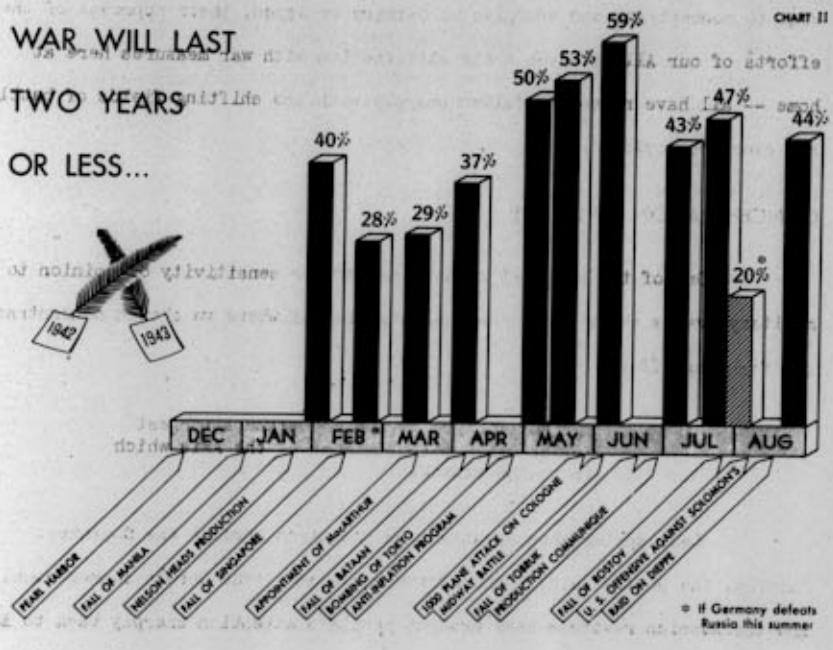


CHART II
WAR WILL LAST
TWO YEARS
OR LESS...
1942
1943
40%
28%
29%
37%
50%
53%
59%
43%
47%
20%*
44%
DEC
JAN
FEB *
MAR
APR
MAY
JUN
JUL
AUG
PEARL HARBOR
FALL OF MANILA
NELSON HEADS PRODUCTION
FALL OF SINGAPORE
APPOINTMENT OF MacARTHUR
FALL OF BATAAN
BOMBING OF TOKYO
ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE
MIDWAY BATTLE
FALL OF TOBRUK
PRODUCTION COMMENCES
FALL OF ROSTOV
U. S. OFFENSIVE AGAINST SOLOMONS
RAID ON DIEPPE
* If Germany defeats Russia this summer

THE LENGTH OF THE WAR

The public's estimate of the ultimate length of the war has, of course, also been very sensitive to military events. In general, people have tended to think in terms of a short war.

Thinking on this issue falls roughly into three periods over the past nine months. (Chart II)

1). In January, two-fifths were confident that two years or less would see an end to the war.* But the bad news from Malaya and the Philippines had a sobering effect, and the fall of Singapore deepened the gloom. until by late February only 28 per cent clung to the optimistic belief that the war would be over within two years.

2). Reports of Russian successes and German difficulties in occupied Europe again lifted American hopes, and in early June, after the Coral Sea and Midway Battles and the 1000-plane attacks on Germany, optimism soared to dangerous heights. At this time almost three-fifths saw the war ending in two years or less.

3). But the fall of Tobruk and German bludgeoning of Russia again deflated American optimism, and by July sentiment had descended to a point near that at the beginning of the war. There it remained through August. In spite of the passage of eight months, once more about two-fifths of the public were saying that the war would be over in two years or less.

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* Two earlier polls were made in December 1941, and early January 1942, in which slightly different phrasings of the question were used. Results were similar to those obtained on the late January poll.

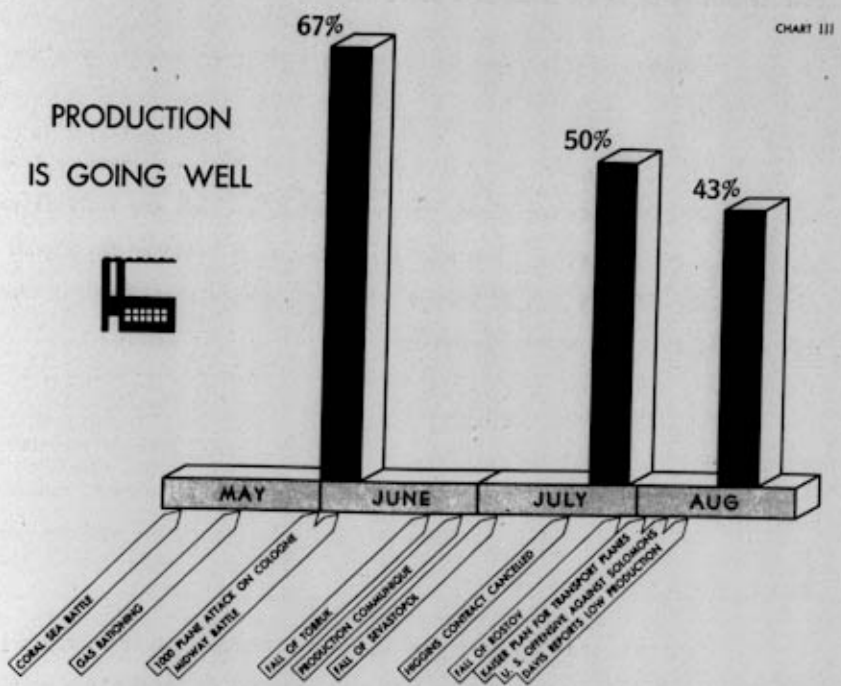


CHART III
PRODUCTION
IS GOING WELL
67%
50%
43%
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUG
CORAL SEA BATTLE
GAS RATIONING
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE
MIDWAY BATTLE
FALL OF TOBRUK
PRODUCTION COMMUNIQUE
FALL OF SEVASTOPOL
PROGRAM CONTRACT CANCELLED
FALL OF ROSTOV
EASIER PLAN FOR TRANSPORT PLANES
U. S. OFFENSIVE AGAINST SOLOMONS
DAVIS REPORTS LOW PRODUCTION

> These facts have important implications for an information and morale program. The shifts from optimism to pessimism and back again suggest that the public may distort the importance of individual military events.

Also, the morale of a people at war will probably not be bettered by having soaring heights of complacency followed by deep valleys of gloom. In any case, the tendency of the "short-war prophets" to be less concerned about the necessity for sacrifices to win the conflict makes it imperative to follow closely opinion on this matter.

SATISFACTION WITH PRODUCTION

The bad news of summer months not only jolted people's ideas regarding the length of the war. Apparently, it has also caused them to turn a more critical eye on the progress of production. News of an impending raw material shortage was simmering in July and reached a boiling point in August. The Higgins ship contract was cancelled. Pressure in the metal salvage drives was being increased. Criticism of W.P.B. and of wasteful practices in Army and Navy munitions policies broke into print. And all these factors have undoubtedly influenced attitudes toward production progress.

Only a short-term trend is available, but the drop in satisfaction from early June to July was quite sharp, and the low level continued in August. (Chart III) Returns from a survey made in late August indicate virtually no change from the mid-August figure. It is likely that this drop in satisfaction was accelerated not only by Allied military reverses, but also by a growing volume of pessimistic reports regarding production.

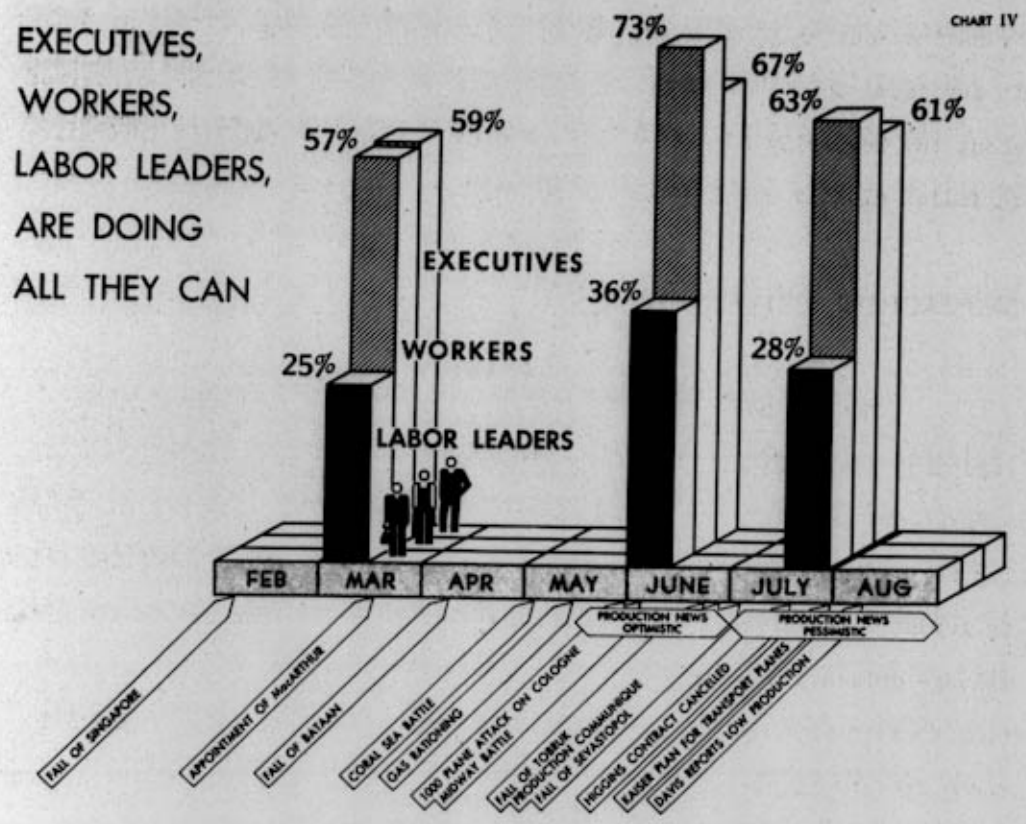


CHART IV
EXECUTIVES,
WORKERS,
LABOR LEADERS,
ARE DOING
ALL THEY CAN
57%
59%
25%
73%
67%
36%
63%
61%
28%
EXECUTIVES
WORKERS
LABOR LEADERS
FEB
MAR
APR
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUG
PRODUCTION NEWS OPTIMISTIC
PRODUCTION NEWS PESSIMISTIC
FALL OF SINGAPORE
APPOINTMENT OF MacARTHUR
FALL OF BATAAN
CORAL SEA BATTLE
GAS RATIONING
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE
MIDWAY BATTLE
FALL OF TOBRUK
PRODUCTION COMMUNIQUE
FALL OF SEVASTOPOL
HIGGINS CONTRACT CANCELLED
EASSER PLAN FOR TRANSPORT PLANES
DAVIS REPORTS LOW PRODUCTION

CRITICISM OF MANAGEMENT AND LABOR

Satisfaction with the three groups manning the production front -- management, workers and labor leaders -- also paralleled the rise and fall of general optimism attributable to military events, and reflected in estimates of the length of the war. Satisfaction was down in March, up in early June, back down again in July. (Chart IV) Returns from a late August poll again show virtually no change from the July figures. On all tests approval of workers and executives almost doubled approval of labor leaders.

It is also notable that attitudinal changes follow almost parallel lines for all three groups. There is little alteration in the relative ranking of these groups except that workers moved up to top place in public favor by early June and held this position in July.

This finding is the more interesting because there have been sporadic newspaper criticisms of strikes, high wages, and overtime pay for the 48-hour week. In contrast, criticism of management has been more or less soft-pedaled in the press, although in August the attack on dollar-a-year men was revived, and the earlier exposé of Standard Oil of New Jersey's tie-up with German cartels may possibly have influenced opinion toward management to some extent.

CRITICISM OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES

Opinion on all the above issues has tended to fluctuate with the tenor of war news. Its general direction has been clear: in response to the most foreboding reports from summer battlefields, the people have gravi-

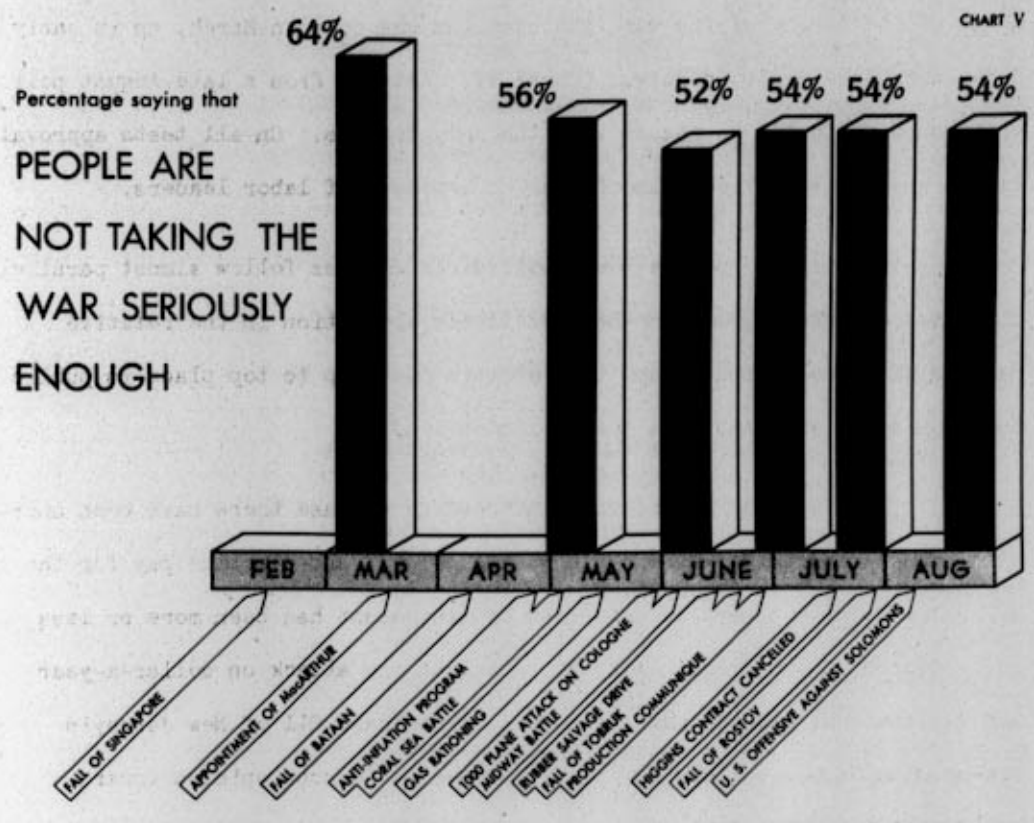
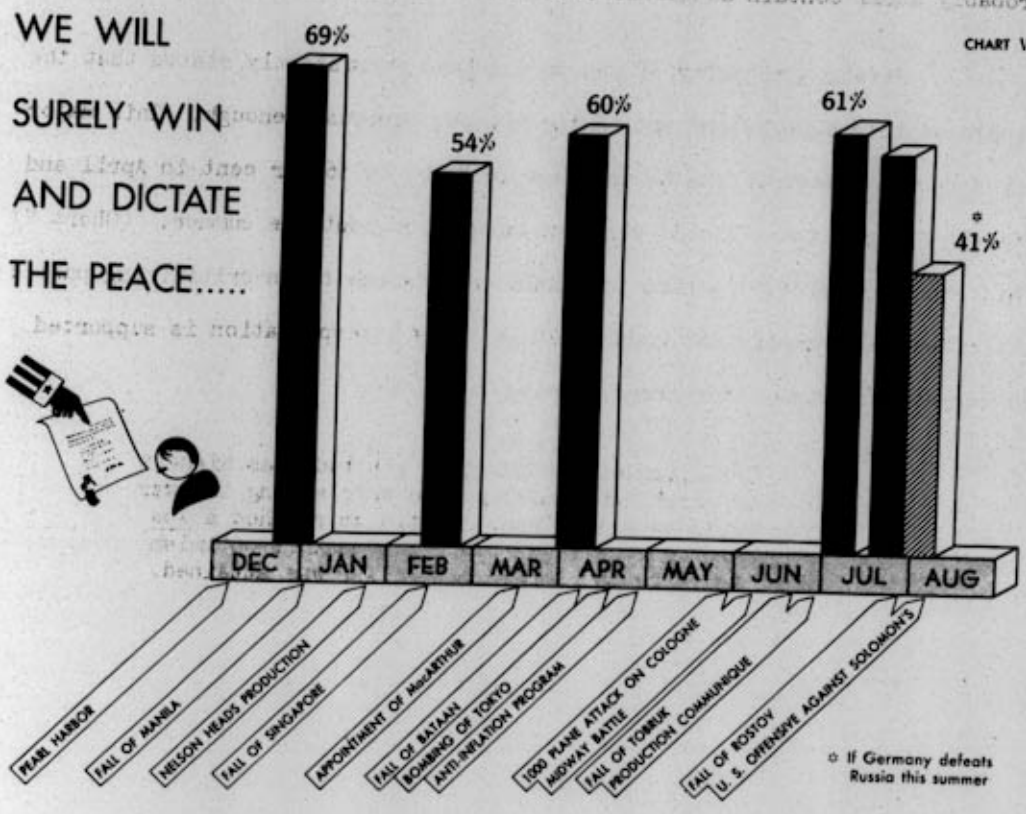


CHART V
Percentage saying that
PEOPLE ARE NOT TAKING THE WAR SERIOUSLY ENOUGH
64%
56%
52%
54%
54%
54%
FEB
MAR
APR
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUG
FALL OF SINGAPORE
APPOINTMENT OF MacARTHUR
FALL OF BATAAN
ANTI-INFLATION PROGRAM
CORAL SEA BATTLE
GAS RATIONING
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE
MIDWAY BATTLE
RUBBER SALVAGE DRIVE
FALL OF TOBRUK
PRODUCTION COMMUNIQUE
HIGGINS CONTRACT CANCELLED
FALL OF ROSTOV
U. S. OFFENSIVE AGAINST SOLOMONS

tated steadily toward a more realistic view of the military situation and the task ahead. Attitudes on two other factors — belief in the seriousness of the public's view of the war, and confidence in our complete victory — have remained remarkably stable since spring, however, and in some cases probably still contain dangerous seeds of overconfidence.

First, a majority of the people have consistently stated that the people of this country are not taking the war seriously enough. This majority dropped, however, from 64 per cent in March to 56 per cent in April and remained barely above the 50 per cent mark throughout the summer. (Chart V) This can be considered a rise in complacency, since those criticizing public attitudes are probably not complacent and this interpretation is supported by correlation with other trend results.

> Criticism of the public's attitude was highest in March, when most people were saying the war would be a long one. Criticism reached a low point in early June when the peak of optimism regarding the length of the war was attained.


WE WILL SURELY WIN AND DICTATE THE PEACE.....
CHART VI
69%
54%
60%
61%
41%
DEC
JAN
FEB
MAR
APR
MAY
JUN
JUL
AUG
PEARL HARBOR
FALL OF MANILA
NELSON HEADS PRODUCTION
FALL OF SINGAPORE
APPOINTMENT OF MacARTHUR
FALL OF BATAAN
BOMBING OF TOKYO
ANTI INFLATION PROGRAM
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE
MIDWAY BATTLE
FALL OF TOBRUK
PRODUCTION COMMUNIQUE
FALL OF ROSTOV
U. S. OFFENSIVE AGAINST SOLOMON'S
* If Germany defeats Russia this summer

OUTCOME OF THE WAR

Perhaps more important as a possible indicator of over-confidence is the fact that the ups-and-downs of allied military fortunes have done little to shake American faith in ultimate victory.

Only in February, after the capture of Manila and about the time of Singapore's fall, did conviction waver that the United States would both win the war and dictate the peace. (Chart VI) It dropped from a high 69 per cent in December to 54 per cent in late February, but it climbed back to 60 per cent in March, and has since persisted on an even keel, in spite of the trying news of British and Russian summer reverses.* About one-fourth of the public, however, have consistently indicated belief that our victory would not be complete. They have clung to the opinion that the Axis would be strong enough to wring major concessions from us at the end of the war.

The stability of results on this question, as compared with the fluctuating findings on others, probably indicates a deep-seated confidence in our ability to triumph despite recurring vicissitudes. It also indicates the persistence of the platitude that Americans can never lose a war because our ancestors have never lost a war in the past.

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*These results were obtained on a four-part attitude scale, which ranged from absolute victory and domination of the peace to defeat. In the middle ground were "Victory for the Allies with certain concessions to the Axis," and a "Draw". About one-fourth of the people consistently chose the "Victory with concessions" alternative, giving an average of 84 per cent to 90 per cent at all times who were positive we would win.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS OUR ALLIES

RUSSIA

Relatively few people were willing to believe that defeat of Russia meant the difference between Allied and Axis victory, but there was a precipitate (17%) drop in optimism as to the war's outcome when the public was presented with the hypothetical possibility of Russia's elimination from the war. (Chart II) Most of those who changed their opinions fell into the group thinking the outcome would be a draw, or those foreseeing victory with concessions to the Axis. Only a relatively small number believed that a Russian defeat would mean an Axis victory over us. Many, however, were unable to answer the hypothetical question.

Quite naturally, the prospect of a Soviet defeat induced pessimism regarding the length of the war. Thus, 47 per cent thought the war would be over in two years or less under present circumstances, but only 20 per cent would be that optimistic if Germany defeated Russia this summer.

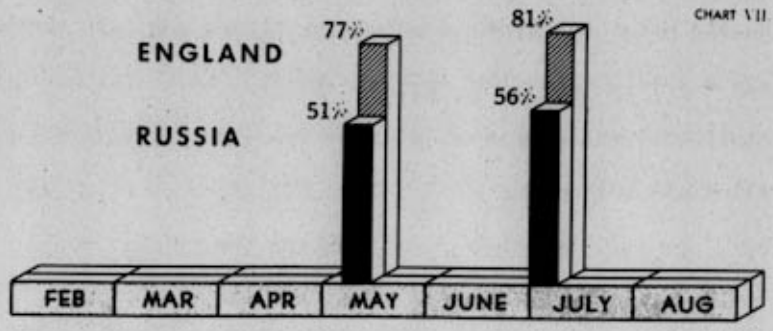
50 per cent thought the war would be longer if Russia lost this summer,
16 per cent estimated it would be the same length,
6 per cent thought it would be shorter, and
28 per cent gave no opinion.

Interviewers reported, however, that many respondents simply could not conceive of Russia being knocked out of the war and wanted to argue the point rather than answer the questions on this issue.

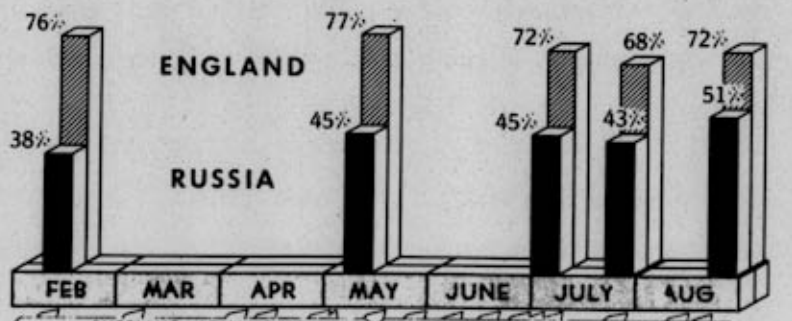
CHART VII

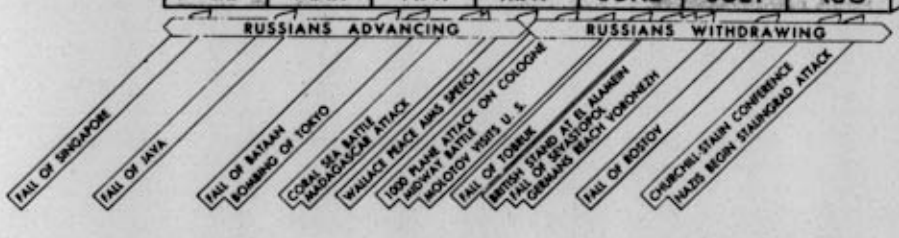
RUSSIA AND ENGLAND WILL

NOT MAKE A SEPARATE PEACE



DO YOU THINK RUSSIA AND ENGLAND WILL COOPERATE WITH US AFTER THE WAR IS WON?



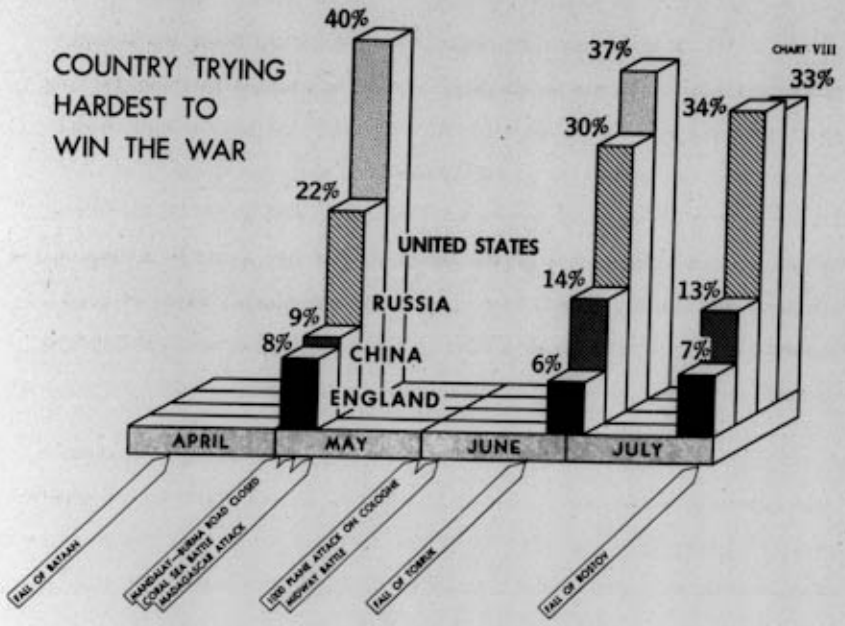


The fact that elimination of the Red Armies was utterly inconceivable to many people, plus the disinclination of the majority to see such a defeat as doing anything other than postpone the ultimate Allied victory, furnish clues to the difficult adjustments in public thinking which might be necessary should the Nazis knock Russia out of the war.

The findings just presented bring into sharp focus the extent of our reliance on Russia as an ally. But to understand American feeling about this alliance it is important to note that attitudes toward Russia during the first few months of our partnership with her though increasingly favorable, have been of an ambivalent character. The shock of the Russo-German pact and disapproval of the attack on Finland, added to a deep-seated and long-standing distrust of the Communistic experiment, have not been suddenly erased from the public mind by the fact that we are now fighting on Russia's side.

For the past three or four months polls have shown consistently that almost half of the population suspect that Russia might make a separate peace with Germany if the opportunity or necessity arose. On the other hand, eight out of ten were certain that we could depend on England not to negotiate separately with the Axis. (Chart VII)

Similarly, distrust of Russia's post-war behavior has been widespread. Until the end of summer, a minority of the public had confidence that she would cooperate with us after the war. But events of the last nine months have caused many Americans to re-examine their stereotypes of Russia. Confidence in her post-war cooperation climbed steadily from 38 per cent in March to 51 per cent in late August. Appreciation of Russia's


COUNTRY TRYING HARDEST TO WIN THE WAR
CHART VIII
40%
22%
9%
8%
37%
30%
14%
6%
34%
33%
13%
7%
UNITED STATES
RUSSIA
CHINA
ENGLAND
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
FALL OF BATAAN
MARGALAY—BURMA ROAD CLOSED
CORAL SEA BATTLE
MADAGASCAR ATTACK
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE
MIDWAY BATTLE
FALL OF TOBRUK
FALL OF ROSTOV

war effort, however, has never been low. The Red Armies have always been credited with "trying harder to win" than our other Allies. And there has been a steady increase in approbation of the all-out nature of the Russian war effort. (Chart VIII)

Thus, coupled with a strong but steadily declining, suspicion of Russia's reliability, there is definite evidence of America's appreciation of Russia's contribution to the war against the Axis.

ENGLAND

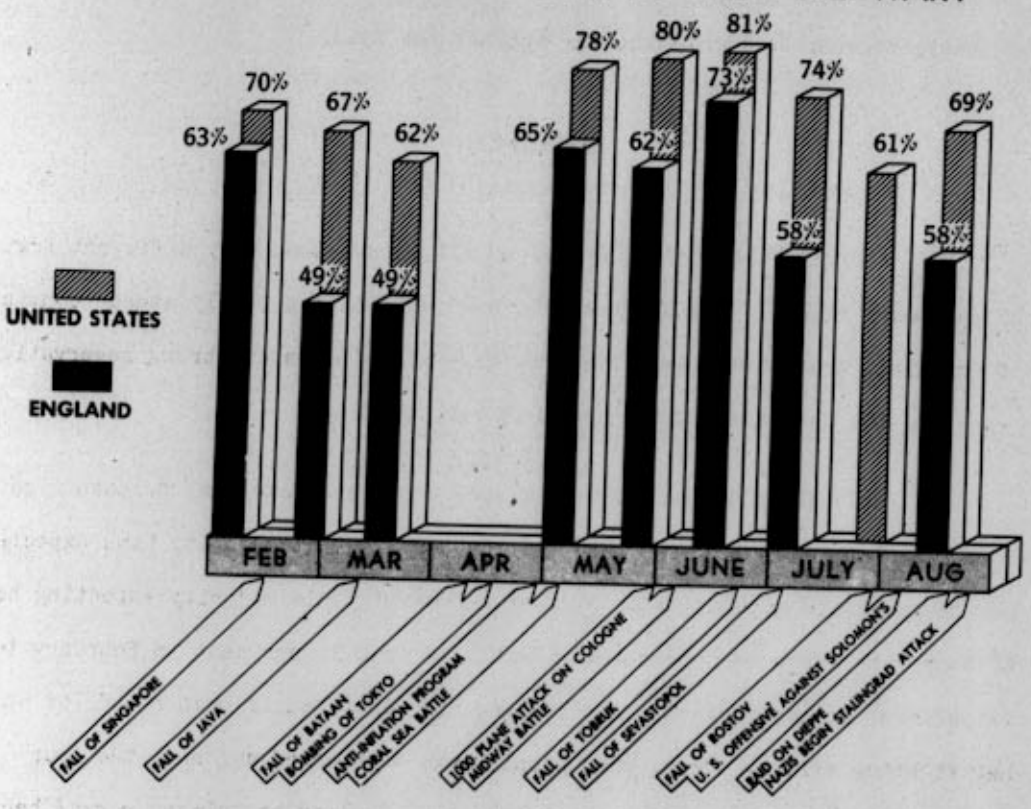
Attitudes toward England as an ally, have been very different from those toward Russia. People generally have exhibited a fairly steady conviction of Britain's trustworthiness, but they have also indicated strong reservations regarding the zeal and effectiveness of her fighting.

Only about 10 per cent have ever expressed fear that Britain might make peace without consulting her Allies, and the vast majority have expected her to cooperate with us after the war. However, this majority expecting her to cooperate has been decreasing slightly -- from 76 per cent in February to 72 per cent in late August. And England has consistently been rated low on her fighting effort. Thus, when people have been asked which of the four main Allies is doing the most to win the war, England has always ranked behind Russia, the United States, and even China.

Trend questions used by the Office of Public Opinion Research, Princeton University, since the beginning of the war give a more precise measurement of public satisfaction with the English war effort. Also, they

CHART IX

DO YOU THINK THE UNITED STATES (ENGLAND) IS DOING ALL IT POSSIBLY CAN TO WIN THE WAR?



furnish an interesting comparable measure of satisfaction with the United States' effort.* The following questions were used to test the attitudes toward each of these two countries:

> "Do you think the United States is doing all it possibly can do to win the war?"
>
> "Do you think the British are doing all they possibly can do to win the war?"

Public satisfaction with England's effort seems to follow closely British military fortunes. It was low in February and March, when Malaya, Java and the Solomons were being swallowed by the Japs. It rose to an all-time high in June, following the occupation of Madagascar and the 1000-plane raids on Germany, but dropped after the fall of Tobruk and the Russian reverses in the Caucasus and Crimea. During the summer while Britain made no striking contributions to the fighting, satisfaction with her effort remained at a low point through the middle of August. (Chart IX)

In the early part of the year comparable satisfaction with the United States' war effort tended to follow the same general pattern as satisfaction with the British effort, although it remained consistently higher. This satisfaction went down in February and March with the bad news from the Pacific and rose again in the late spring. With the coming of summer and the beginning of the German campaign in the East a striking change occurred. Satisfaction with our part in the war took a nose-dive of 20 percentage points from June 9th to July 14th. The result very probably harks back again to growing recognition of our reliance on Russia. Undoubtedly, impatience over our failure to open a second front, coupled

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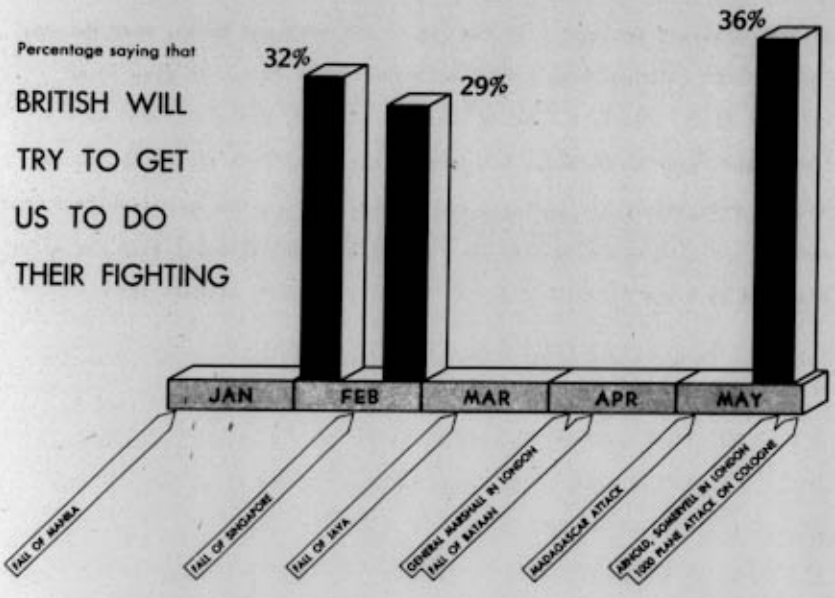
* (Note): The results on these and other O P O R questions are the property of the Office of Public Opinion Research, Princeton, New Jersey. They have been made available to the O W I for <u>administrative use only</u> and are not to be quoted or published further without permission of O P O R

CHART X


Percentage saying that
BRITISH WILL
TRY TO GET
US TO DO
THEIR FIGHTING
32%
29%
36%
JAN
FEB
MAR
APR
MAY
FALL OF MANILA
FALL OF SINGAPORE
FALL OF JAVA
GENERAL MARSHALL IN LONDON
FALL OF BATAAN
MADAGASCAR ATTACK
ARNOLD, SOMERVELL IN LONDON
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE

with concern over Russian reverses, are at the root of this increased skepticism concerning our efforts.

The Solomon Islands' offensive probably allayed some of the criticism, for satisfaction turned upward in August. However, if any catastrophe should befall the Russians, it is probable that the critical trend would be resumed.

Another trend followed by O P O R sought to determine how much dissatisfaction with the British was attributable to the belief that "Britain will fight to the last American". The following question was used:

> "Do you think the English will try to get us to do most of the fighting for them in this war, or do you think they will do their fair share of fighting?"

This question <u>does not</u> seem to be influenced so directly by British military successes or defeats. (Chart X) Somewhat more than a third of those with opinions have consistently accepted the charge that the British will let us fight their war, and this proportion was slightly higher on the last test, made in the latter part of May. The stable results on this question suggest that the critical group probably includes a nucleus of persons with fairly strongly entrenched anti-British views. And the problem of converting them to a frame of mind more conducive to all-out cooperation presents an informational challenge of real magnitude.

CHINA

Attitudes toward China, our third major ally, have on the whole been very favorable. Remembering her tenacious struggle against disheartening odds through the 1930's, Americans have overwhelmingly rejected the idea that she would make a separate peace. An even larger majority have been sure that China will cooperate with us after the war. Perhaps because her fighting potential seems small and her continued resistance is taken for granted, China is given relatively little recognition as the country trying "hardest" to win the war. She has consistently ranked third, behind Russia and the United States. (Chart VIII)

RELIANCE ON OUR ALLIES

Further evidence of distrust of our Allies was found in the general doubt and skepticism with which people regarded the possibility of repayment for our lend-lease shipments. In February about a fourth were in doubt as to what Russia would do, and approximately a fifth did not know whether England would repay us. In both cases the remainder divided evenly between those who maintained we would and those who thought we would not be repaid for our lend-lease aid.

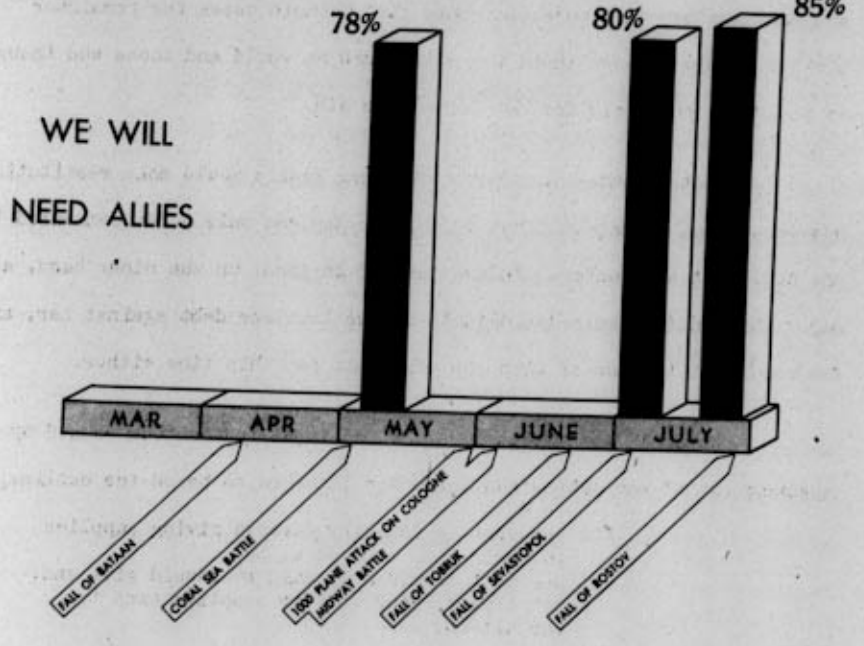
Most of those who doubted whether Russia would make restitution, however, thought she would not be able to pay and only a few commented that she could not be trusted. In the case of England, on the other hand, a majority tended to hold her default on her last war debt against her, and reasoned that because of this she would not pay this time either.

Nevertheless the hangover of emotional indignation caused by the renunciation of war debts from World War I seemed to be on the decline, for:

> 22 per cent in February favored giving supplies to England or to Russia, but
> 35 per cent in mid-July said we should give and not expect repayment for supplies sent to our allies.

In spite of considerable feeling that we might never be reimbursed for our war aid, most Americans favored maintaining a continuous flow of supplies to the countries manning the battle lines. After the outbreak of war in December, even when our own needs for an under-equipped army were

CHART XI


78%
80%
85%
WE WILL
NEED ALLIES
MAR
APR
MAY
JUNE
JULY
FALL OF BATAAN
CORAL SEA BATTLE
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE
MIDWAY BATTLE
FALL OF TOBRUK
FALL OF SEVASTOPOL
FALL OF ROSTOV

urgent, 58 per cent thought we should send Britain and Russia at least as many supplies as we did before the war. Some of these even advocated increasing our shipments. Total favor for maintaining lend-lease at least on a par with shipments before the war had not increased by February. Actually, however, sentiment on the issue had grown more favorable, since the number who said we should send more supplies rose from 21 per cent in December to 28 per cent at this later date.

While American approval of individual allies has had both ups and downs, awareness of our need for allies has been keen from the start, and has been steadily increasing. In early May when this question was first asked, the majority were of the opinion that this country required the assistance of other countries to achieve victory and it had increased by late July when the issue was last put to the public. (Chart XI)

There is further wholesome evidence that most Americans conceive of the relationship with our allies as a give-and-take affair. As already reported, they have become increasingly aware of the contributions Russia and other allies are making to our cause. The polls also reveal that people realize the necessity of repaying these contributions in other than monetary ways.

Americans definitely favor opening a second front which will relieve pressure on the Russians.

> Early in August 62 per cent of the public thought that "in the next two or three months the Allies should try to land troops somewhere in Europe to attack Germany".

They favor this move to divert Nazi attention even though many hold grave doubts as to the success of such action.

46 per cent said the chances of success were very good,
26 per cent thought they were about 50-50,
13 per cent rated the chances of success as less than 50-50, and
15 per cent would not express an opinion.

A clue to the probable reason for the sentiment in favor of an invasion was found in a poll made later in August, which revealed that 42 per cent of the public doubted whether Russia could "hold out until this winter if she didn't get more help from the Allies than she's now getting".

OTHER STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

There is further evidence that the public would welcome the institution of more offensive tactics on the part of the United Nations.

The public wants our armed forces to take the war to the enemy, and

they favor the use of hard-hitting all-out tactics.

The isolationist argument that we should bring our forces back home and concentrate on guarding our own shores has never been accepted by the public since the war's outbreak. In March when the Japanese were reaching a high water mark of success in the Pacific, and domestic gloom was unusually heavy (only 28 per cent thought the war would be over in two years or less), the public overwhelmingly opposed any compromise or withdrawal. Only

1 per cent wanted to "withdraw from the Far East and make peace with Japan",
4 per cent wanted to "withdraw to Hawaii, Alaska and our own Pacific Coast and let the Japs carry the war to us",
88 per cent wanted to "keep fighting an all-out war against the Japs wherever we can possibly attack them", and
7 per cent were uncertain.

The four part question (see Page 1 and Chart 1) on where we should concentrate our efforts has also, since May, given people an opportunity to say that we should "pull our forces close to home and use them to protect our own shores". In choosing from the four alternatives presented, never more than 7 or 8 per cent have advocated this defensive policy -- not in early June when the Midway Battle and the bombing of Cologne engendered high optimism, nor in mid-July when the public was sobered by bad news from Russia and Egypt.

Also, an OPOR question has drawn the issue sharply by presenting only two alternatives which forced a choice between offensive and defensive strategy. The following question was used:

> "Which of these things do you think the United States should do? Send most of our Army abroad to fight the enemy wherever they are, or keep most of our Army at home to protect the United States?"

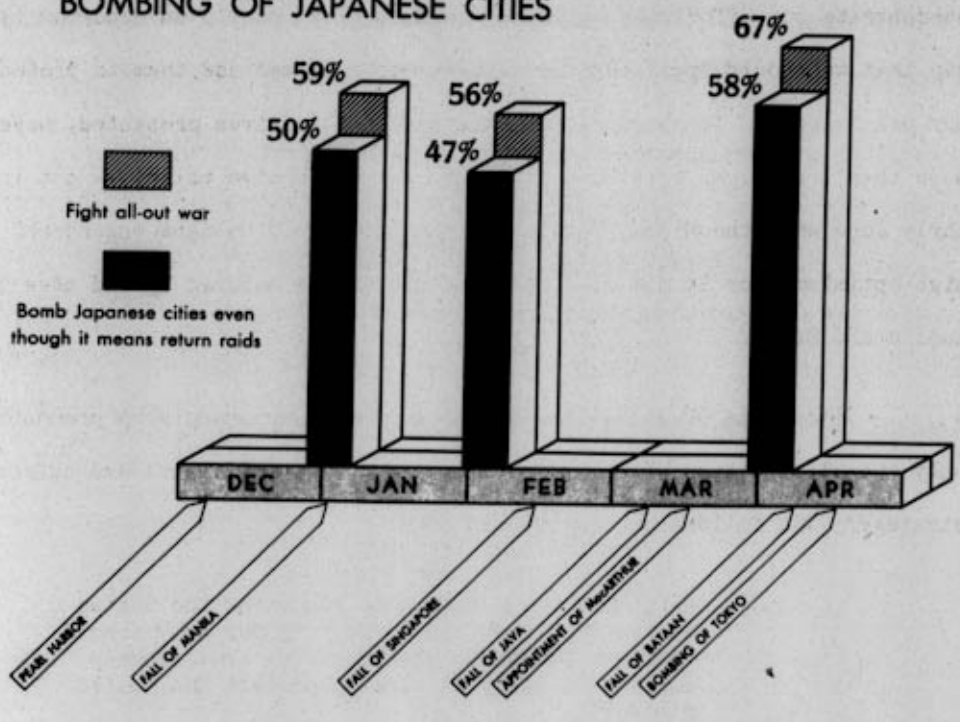
The results showed that a somewhat larger percentage, but still a minority favored defensive strategy, and this minority has tended to decline in recent months. It was:

28 per cent in March
25 per cent in June
24 per cent in July

Percentage saying

CHART XII

WE SHOULD FIGHT AN ALL-OUT WAR INCLUDING THE BOMBING OF JAPANESE CITIES



On the other hand, the percent who want to send most of our Army abroad has risen from 55 to 61 per cent in the same period. And of course, the minority included many who favored carrying the attack to the enemy even though they were unwilling to devote the major share of our forces to the task.

The public has also not advocated pulling our punches in the war against Japan, even though we might suffer hard blows in return. They have, in fact, grown belligerently more in favor of all-out tactics. (Chart XII)

In December, immediately after the outbreak of war, 59 per cent said "fight an all-out war including bombing of Jap cities". In late January and early February support for this policy dropped slightly to 56 per cent. But with the fall of Singapore and Java, attitudes toward Japan toughened, and support for all-out tactics jumped to 67 per cent. On each of these polls the fact that such offensive tactics might bring reprisal bombings of our own cities did not deter more than 11 per cent from an all-out attitude.

One reason why the all-out policy won support, however, may be the fact that comparatively few people have ever been very worried about the prospect of attacks on our own cities. In December people saw only slight danger of extensive raids on our west coast and even less danger of raids on the east coast. Fears increased slightly by March, but even then a large majority continued to discount the possibility of raids, and the bulk of those who did expect such attacks believed they would be "few and far between".

ARE YOU FOR A NEGOTIATED PEACE?

CHART XIII

BEFORE Pearl Harbor

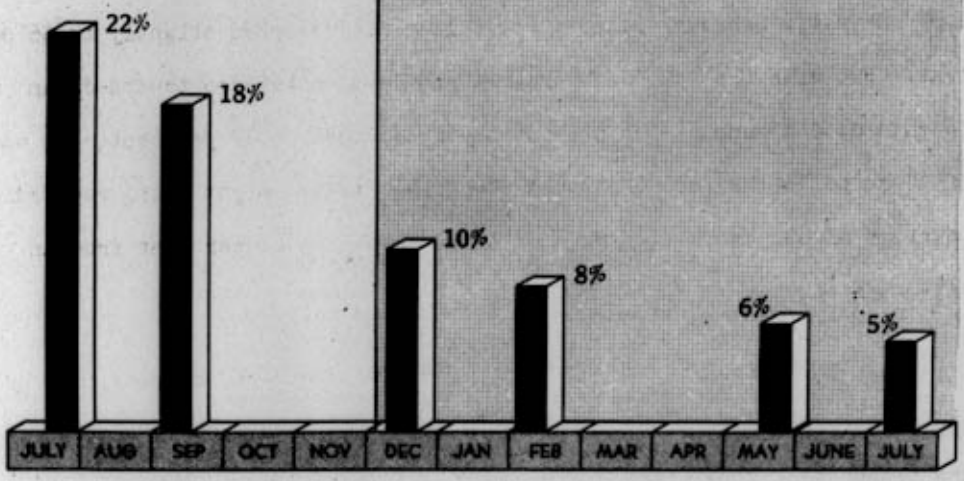
QUESTION:

If peace could be obtained today on the basis of Germany holding the countries she has conquered so far, and Britain keeping the British Empire as it now stands, would you be in favor of such a peace?

AFTER Pearl Harbor

QUESTION:

If Hitler offered peace now to all countries on the basis of not going any farther, but of leaving matters as they are now, would you favor or oppose such a peace?



	On Pacific Coast		On Atlantic Coast	
	December	March	December	March
Believes air raids are:				
Very probable	23%	25%	8%	12%
Only fairly probable . .	41	45	32	37
Not at all probable . . .	25	18	48	37
Don't know	11	12	12	14

NEGOTIATED AND SEPARATE PEACE

Much of the foregoing evidence has indicated that the American people seem to be preoccupied mainly with the problem of how to fight a hard-hitting, winning war. They have apparently given little thought to the problem of how to make peace or come to terms with the enemy. Thus, during the last year — both before and after the outbreak of the war — American opposition to a negotiated peace has steadily stiffened. O P O R has used two different questions to measure this sentiment before and after the outbreak of war, but the general idea of the two seems close enough to allow qualified trend comparisons. These questions have been asked by O.P.O.R. over the past year.

> (Before Pearl Harbor) "If peace could be obtained today on the basis of Germany holding the countries she has conquered so far, and Britain keeping the British Empire as it now stands, would you be in favor of such a peace?"

> (After Pearl Harbor) "If Hitler offered peace now to all countries on the basis of not going any further, but of leaving matters as they are now, would you favor or oppose such a peace?"

There was a continuous decline in sentiment for peace, from 21 per cent in July 1941, to 5 per cent in July 1942. (Chart XIII) These questions undoubtedly measure active, outspoken desire for peace at a fairly high price, rather than willingness to consider specious, plausible-sounding proposals

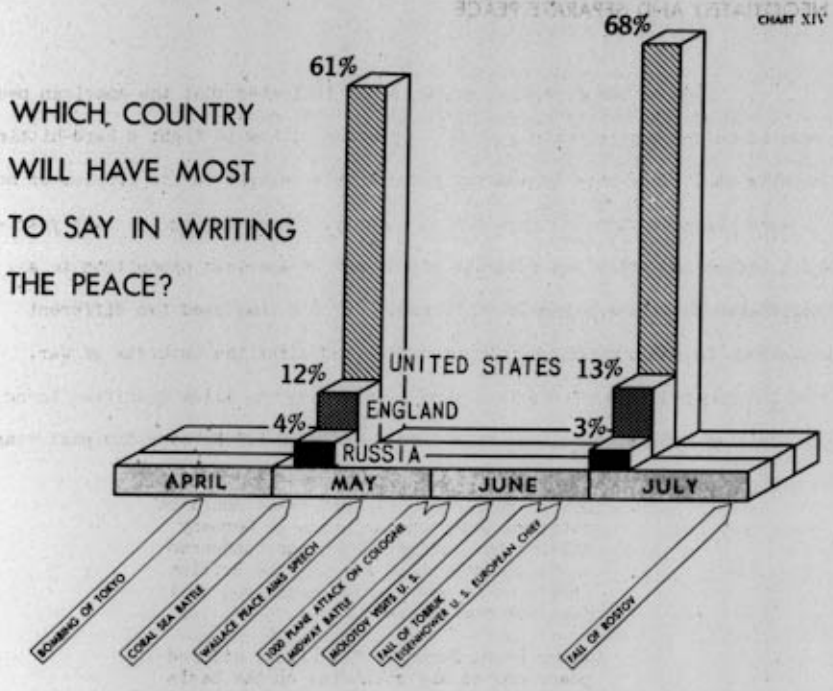


CHART XIV
WHICH COUNTRY WILL HAVE MOST TO SAY IN WRITING THE PEACE?
61%
68%
12%
13%
4%
3%
UNITED STATES
ENGLAND
RUSSIA
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
BOMBING OF TOKYO
CORAL SEA BATTLE
WALLACE PEACE AIMS SPEECH
1000 PLANE ATTACK ON COLOGNE
MIDWAY BATTLE
MOLOTOV VISITS U. S.
FALL OF TOBRUK
EISENHOWER U. S. EUROPEAN CHIEF
FALL OF BOSTOV

with which the Nazis would surely clothe any peace offensive. But the drop in outspoken desire for peace at this high price has probably been accompanied also by a drop in willingness to consider proposals of any sort. It is also perhaps significant that other "trap" questions presenting such plausible-sounding peace proposals have rarely gained more than 10 or 15 per cent approval. Also interesting in this connection is the fact that in May 69 per cent of Americans believed that Germany would like to make peace with us on the basis of the status quo, which figure dropped to 55 per cent in July, after German summer campaigns had begun.

It should be realized, however, that this peace sentiment has been measured during a period when the average American has felt the impact of war very little, when U.S. casualties have been relatively light, and while confidence in the ultimate victory has been exceedingly high. Should Russia actually be forced to capitulate, or should some other catastrophe befall the Allies, it is conceivable that sentiment for a "negotiated victory" might increase.

The Peace Treaty and the Post-War World

When peace with victory does come, Americans think the United States will have the strongest voice in fixing the peace terms. (Chart XIV) In May a majority thought that this country would "have most to say in writing the peace treaty", and the vote increased in July. Those who did not mention the United States cited England more often than Russia as the country that would have the most to say.

Since people's ideas regarding the length and difficulty of the war are changeable and uncertain, opinion concerning the kind of treaty to be made and the planning of the post-war world must be considered with much caution. Nevertheless, some current attitudes are worth noting.

There is evidence from polling in both February and July that while people differ widely in their recommendations for precise treatment of the Axis after an Allied victory, only about one-fourth of them would go so far as to advocate destroying them as nations.

The prospect of additional territory as a result of the war appealed to few Americans when they expressed themselves on this issue last February. A fifth thought we ought to get more territory than we had before the war if the Allies win, but most of these people wanted only strategically-located territories for military bases.

There are several indications that in the future the public wishes the United States to take a more active role in international affairs than it took before this war. In late August, 63 per cent of the public approved the idea of this country joining an organization of nations after the war.

Growing belief that we made a mistake by staying out of the League of Nations after the last war provides further evidence of the increase in internationalism among Americans. Almost exactly a year ago, Dr. Gallup's American Institute of Public Opinion, asked the following question. It was repeated by the Bureau of Intelligence on July 1st of this year, and again in late August. The group disapproving our past isolationism rose 10 per cent.

"Do you think the U.S. should have joined
the League of Nations after the last war?"

	July 30, 1941 (Gallup poll)	July 1, 1942	Aug. 25, 1942
Yes	37%	46%	47%
No	37	23	28
Don't know . .	26	31	25

Another measure of United States' willingness to participate more directly in world affairs in the post-war period has been obtained by the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton with a slightly different question:

> "Which of these two things do you think the U.S. should try to do when the war is over: Stay out of world affairs as much as we can, or take an active part in world affairs?"

In January, and again in March, 72 per cent favored the United States taking an active role. This figure dropped slightly in mid-June (68%), but the majority in favor of international participation remained high.

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

WASHINGTON

September 17, 1942

My dear Miss Tully:

I am enclosing a copy of an INTELLIGENCE REPORT on "Reactions to the Russian Winter Campaign" which was prepared for the Director of the Office of War Information.

Sincerely yours,

R Keith Kane

R. Keith Kane
Chief, Bureau of Intelligence

Miss Grace Tully
Secretary
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

PSF
DWI

9·16·42

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

REACTIONS TO THE RUSSIAN WINTER CAMPAIGN

CONFIDENTIAL

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OFFICE OF
WAR INFORMATION

BUREAU OF
INTELLIGENCE

COPY No. 1

Such recommendations and suggestions as may appear in this report have not been cleared in advance with the Director of the Office of War Information and do not necessarily reflect his views or those of the Office of War Information. Recommendations and suggestions, if they do appear, are only submitted by individuals in the Bureau of Intelligence who have assembled the data and they are offered for the consideration of appropriate authorities.

The Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of War Information uses a variety of procedures and techniques to obtain its data on the attitudes of people and on what is brought to their attention. These procedures and techniques have been found reliable after extensive experimentation over a period of years.

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THE REPORT IN BRIEF

German successes in South Russia this summer have demonstrated that the Russian winter offensive was reported to the American people in terms of exaggerated optimism.

Wishful thinking inclined Americans to overrate the significance of Red Army successes. But it is clear now that this tendency fostered and supported extravagant hopes. Headlines screamed of Russian victories: "Germans smashed" . . . "Russians drive on" . . . "Nazi stand crushed." News commentators, editorial writers and government spokesmen, though they gave a somewhat more realistic view of the situation than did the headlines, also exaggerated the scope and success of the Red Army's winter campaign. Only an unheeded minority tried to present the offensive in its proper perspective.

This distorted reporting and interpretation promoted some relaxation of effort -- results which exactly suited Hitler's purposes. They left the public unprepared for subsequent events, and thus paved the way for an unhealthy swing from optimism to pessimism in July.

To some extent they impaired confidence in the accuracy of all the war news released, not only in Russia but in the United States and its other allies as well. Had not many Americans been unaware of the key role of Russia in the war and had not the nation's attention been focused on sobering reverses in the Pacific, even more harm might have been done.

The danger points to the need for using a two-fold informational approach to prevent the public from getting an unbalanced conception of the progress of the war. In addition to safeguarding the accuracy of official news, it is necessary to give analysts and editorial commentators effective guidance in the interpretation of important developments.

"Those who indulge themselves in false optimism, those who believe that the peoples who are fighting with us for our common cause should relieve us of our due share of sacrifice, those who are reluctant to give their all in this struggle for the survival on the earth of what is fine and decent, must be regarded as enemies of the American people." --- Sumner Welles, address at the Arlington National Amphitheatre, Memorial Day, 1942.

REACTIONS TO THE RUSSIAN WINTER CAMPAIGN

German gains in the battle for southern Russia have compelled Americans to revise their appraisal of the military situation on the Eastern front. It is clear now that the published reports of the Russian winter offensive, in newspapers and other media, fostered extravagant, unjustifiable hopes and gave a misleading impression of the relative strength of the Red Army and the Reichswehr.

The damaging effect such inadequate reporting can have on war morale has perhaps not yet received sufficient attention. The concept of total war calls for recognition of the close interrelationship of psychological, military and economic activities. An over-optimistic interpretation of a military campaign may breed complacency; and that complacency in turn may make a nation half-hearted in the prosecution of the war, inclined to postpone important decisions and to balk at sacrifices.

Inaccurate reporting is the foe of another component of sound morale, a reasonable stability of opinion. In a global war, in which the strength of 29 nations is pitted against strong enemies who have been preparing for the struggle for years, it is clear that the total balance of forces cannot

shift significantly in a day, a week or a month. But poor reporting, both because of its immediate impact and because it leaves us unprepared for subsequent events, encourages a violent fluctuation of opinion from fatuous optimism to extreme and unreasoning despair. The steady, resolute prosecution of the war is impeded, at times by complacency, at times by defeatism.

A third disadvantage of reporting which breeds unjustified hopes is that it may undermine confidence in all of the war news released by a particular nation, and even impair confidence in the reports of its allies. A recent Bureau of Intelligence study indicates that confidence in United Nations reports has, in fact, been somewhat impaired in recent months because they have so frequently had to give belated confirmation to Axis claims and because of the belief, justified or not, that bad news is often screened out of American releases. The reputation for reliability earned by German military communiques has won a wider acceptance for all news from Axis sources from a public insufficiently familiar with the Goebbels technique of mixing truth and falsehood.

TREATMENT OF THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE

The treatment of the Russian winter offensive provides an instructive case history of the ease with which war news can be distorted and morale impaired, in the absence of positive efforts on the part of the Government to eliminate distortion and to counter the propaganda strategy of the enemy.

Even before the termination of the Germans' 1941 offensive on December 7, both newspaper accounts and official statements encouraged an inaccurate appraisal of what was occurring in Russia. On July 2, Stalin announced:

"The enemy's best divisions and the best units of his air force have already been crushed." On September 9, Churchill proclaimed: "Already in three months Hitler has lost more German blood than was shed in any single year of the last war." Churchill may have been referring to German losses in the first World War on the Eastern front alone, but he did not in any way qualify his statement. The fact is that Germany's total casualties in 1916 were more than three and one-quarter million.

Subsequent statements by Churchill, Stalin and others minimized Russian reverses and overemphasized the cost the Germans were forced to pay, in terms of casualties, for the vast and valuable stretches of territory they over-ran. But the success of the German offensive was perhaps itself an adequate antidote for the over-optimistic official statements which appeared prior to the onset of winter.

With the launching of the Russian winter offensive, a sharp gap materialized between the reports of military developments and the actual state of affairs. During its winter campaign the Red Army reoccupied or recaptured a certain amount of territory and forced the Germans to utilize a number of divisions they would have preferred to send to the zone of the interior to rest and refurbish. In turning upon an enemy which had been pressing it backward for months, it exhibited recuperative power and courage which were an inspiration to the enemies of Hitler throughout the world.

But its offensive engaged only a fraction of the German forces; took almost no important strategic points they seriously tried to defend; may have been as costly to the Russians as to the Germans; and, as subsequent events proved, neither routed the German army nor reduced its strength to the point where it could no longer recapture the initiative.

News stories, editorials, the comment of columnists, and official statements all gave a false impression of the magnitude, strategic importance and success of the Red Army offensive. A few individuals tried to present the campaign in its proper perspective but their voices were drowned out in the hubbub of optimistic interpretations.

A few headlines and leads will perhaps recall the flavor of news treatment of the offensive:

GERMANS SMASHED, 85,000 DIE, VITAL POINTS RETAKEN IN DEBACLE

BERNE, Dec. 13--(New York Times)

By Daniel T. Brigham

BERNE, Dec. 26--"German forces on the Russian front continue their headlong retreat..." (New York Times)

RUSSIANS DRIVE ON, CRUSH NAZI STAND

BERNE, Jan. 23--(New York Times)

SMOLENSK IN PERIL OF SOVIET PINCERS, VICTORY NEWS IS AWAITED

BERNE, Feb. 20--(New York Times)

RED ARMY BATTERS KHARKOV DEFENSES, LATVIA ENTRY ALSO IS INTIMATED

BERNE, Feb. 21--(New York Times)

NEW RUSSIAN FEAT ROUTS A NAZI ARMY

MOSCOW, Feb. 25--(AP) (New York Times)

NAZIS FACE HUGH VYAZMA TRAP

BERNE, Feb. 26--(New York Times)

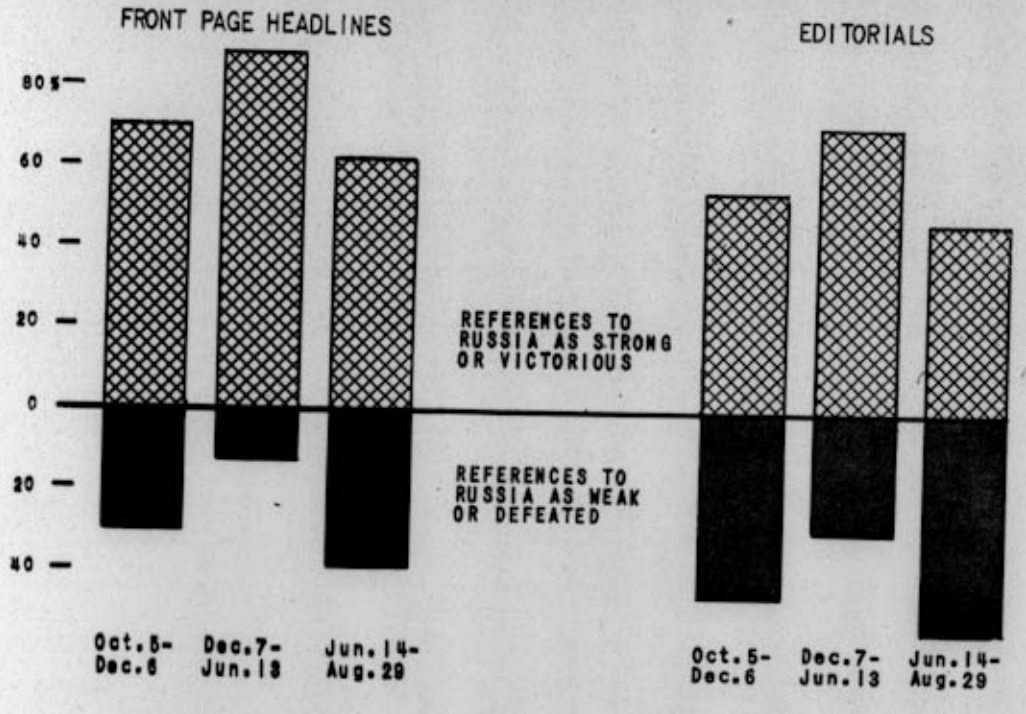
REDS REPORT TRAP CLOSED. GERMAN GENERAL ADMITS SITUATION "HOPELESS"

MOSCOW, Feb. 27--(AP) (Baltimore Sun)

These quotations are representative, not exceptional. Even during the period of the Germans' 1941 offensive, newspapers had given a misleading impression of the strength of the Red Army. As generally happens in the treatment of war news, small successes were played up to counterbalance important reverses, so that the number of references to Russia as strong or victorious actually exceeded the number of references to her as weak or defeated.

TREATMENT OF RUSSIA'S STRENGTH

In the New York Times, October 1941 through August 1942



The chart bove illustrates the ratio between references to Russian strength and references to Russian weakness in the New York Times for three periods since the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. No attention was paid

(9-16-42)

to the relative importance of the references; thus a front page headline reporting a minor Russian gain was given the same weight on the plus side as was given on the minus side to a front page headline reporting a major Russian disaster. Half of the chart shows this ratio as it appeared in front page headlines, while the other half illustrates the ratio in editorial treatment. During the winter campaign, it will be seen, the disproportion between the references to Russia as strong and the references to her as weak became overwhelming in news stories. Editorial treatment in the Times was somewhat more restrained. The most significant aspect of the chart is the sharp variation in the ratio between optimistic and pessimistic emphasis from period to period.

EDITORIAL TREATMENT

Many of the editorials on Russia during the period of the winter campaign sidestepped the matter of her strength or discussed the matter in neutral terms. But most of the editorials which did deal with the subject presented Russia as powerful and victorious. Relatively few editorials maintained with any insistence that the news from Russia had to be interpreted cautiously.

Most columnists also went all-out in describing the Russian offensive. The military commentator of the New York Sun wrote on December 23:

> "Nazi casualties are mounting by the tens of thousands in the...disordered retreat... Unless the Germans can hold within the next twenty days...the present retreat will develop into one of the greatest debacles in history..."

Hanson Baldwin's January 7 column in New York Times was captioned: "Nazis hard pressed by Russians and history hints of new routs." An AP

[1942

commentator wrote, on January 14: "Germany's reverses on the Russian front have upset the whole Axis applecart, usually reliable informants reported from Europe today." Dorothy Thompson consistently exaggerated Russian successes. On April 15 she wrote: "Our strategic position is good... Germany is in a pincer... The Russians...hold a superiority in manpower as well as their badly underrated air power." Major Eliot described the Red Army's spring offensive against Kharkov as "a clear-cut victory for the Russians."

Official statements frequently struck the same note. To some extent they were probably influenced by a desire to puncture the myth of Nazi invincibility and to present Russia as a powerful ally which could be counted upon to continue the struggle against Hitler. But they were perhaps influenced to some extent by wishful thinking as well. In any case, they reinforced, instead of correcting, the misleading impression the media gave of Russian strength.

Some of the commentary which appeared during this period, it is true, was sophisticated and realistic. The New York Post's military expert, Fletcher Pratt, wrote on February 24:

> "The strictly temporary and local significance of the positions...needs emphasis... There is no real front at all, only a series of fortified positions...all still in Nazi hands... along with the only reliable means of communication... the railroads."

On several other occasions, Pratt wrote along the same lines. On March 20 a UP reporter wrote from Moscow: "Reports that the German army on the eastern front is riddled by defeatism and a shattered morale are nonsense." And Secretary Knox stubbornly maintained (in a press conference, January 14): "I do not think there has been a rout of the Germans in Russia."

But such comments were rare and received little notice. Most

interpretations of the winter campaign encouraged the dangerous belief that the Red Army was a match, or more than a match, for the Reichswehr.

RESPONSIBILITY

Our own wishes were primarily responsible for our overestimation of Russia's winter military successes. Dupes of our own hopes, we unquestionably looked for evidence to bolster the belief that the tide had turned in Russia and that the Germans were being soundly thrashed. Inaccurate Russian military reporting encouraged us to form an overoptimistic estimate of the real situation.

Some students of psychological warfare believe that our false appraisal of the Russian situation was in part the intended result of German propaganda. Although the real difficulties the Germans faced may have dictated the tone of their winter statements, many straws indicate that they deliberately fostered a pessimistic appraisal of their situation on the Eastern front, just as they had earlier lulled the world into believing that the war on the Western front was a "phony." It is certain that they did not exert themselves to dispute Russian communiques, and that the speeches delivered by prominent Nazis during the winter months were consistently gloomy in tone. By putting a pessimistic interpretation on her situation in Russia. Germany could hope at once to stiffen home morale and to soften United Nations' resistance. She well knew that complacency might weaken the feeling that it was urgently necessary to aid our Russian allies and in general make us less resolute in the prosecution of the war.

Many of the stories which described the difficulties the Reichswehr faced in Russia and the deterioration of conditions within Germany emanated from centers where they might readily have been planted by the Germans

themselves, notably from Stockholm and Berne. Yet these stories were accepted as authentic by the most reputable American newspapers and usually run without cautionary statements or reservations. A few examples are given below:

CRACK IN NAZI MORALE SEEN

(Chicago Daily News Service)

BERNE, Dec. 12--Leading Nazi circles are turning seriously to problems of morale..according to Die Weltwoche of Zurich ...it indicates that dissatisfaction is not confined to the soldiers...but extends to the civilian populace...
(Chicago Daily News)

KNOCKS ARE HEARD IN NAZI WAR ENGINE

STOCKHOLM, Jan. 25--
(New York Times)

CRISIS IN FOOD HITS GERMANY

(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

STOCKHOLM, Feb. 25--
(Washington Times-Herald)

MANY SIGNS OF AN UNSOUND CONDITION ARE NOTED BY OBSERVERS IN SWEDEN

By Daniel T. Brigham

STOCKHOLM, Dec. 20--"The German situation...has never been as unsound as it is today...If more authorized confirmation of this impression were needed, Herr Hitler has provided it...."
(New York Times)

REICH FOOD, CLOTHING DIFFICULTIES INCREASE

BERNE, April 17--(AP)

Speeches by Nazi officials during the winter stalemate were consistently grim and pessimistic. Hitler himself declared, on January 30, "Germany is going through the worst winter since Napoleon." Again and again Goebbels insisted that Germany was fighting for its very existence. The Nazi leaders put continual stress on the necessity for making sacrifices and enduring

hardships.

Most American commentary, both by government spokesmen and publicists, encouraged the nation to accept these pessimistic accounts and speeches at their full face value. Sumner Welles called Hitler's speech of March 15 "an admission of defeat." In the same month A. A. Berle commented: "We now have information from sources inside Germany making it clear that the Germans themselves know that there can be but one end." Hitler's speech of April 26 was almost universally regarded as an indication that the German situation was desperate. The New York Herald Tribune summed up the general reaction:

> "Washington viewed the speech as a striking indication that Der Fuehrer was losing his grip on the situation in the Third Reich... The general impression was that it justified the atmosphere of optimism that has been prevalent here..."

A few observers were not taken in. H. J. Taylor, who had been a correspondent in Berlin, warned that the Nazis had "dedicated themselves to making us think they will fall apart." Constantine Brown pointed out on more than one occasion that the Germans were deliberately attempting to create an optimistic climate of opinion in this country. And on January 14 Secretary Knox declared: "Nearly all the stories about the terrible situation in Germany originate in territory controlled by Germany... I have a hunch the Germans are putting out these stories to take the fine edge off our energy and singleness of purpose..."

Optimistic commentary, however, predominated. The consequences, whether the Nazis were primarily responsible for them or not, exactly suited their purposes.

REACTIONS 9-16-42

The amount of damage done by the distortion of the Russian winter campaign is not exactly measurable. At the very least, however, it helped to sustain an over-sanguine view of the progress of the war. There is evidence for this hypothesis in the fact that, once the Russian "victories" ended, there was a perceptible change in people's expectations about the length of the war. In June, before Germany began to score renewed successes on the Russian front, and while America's hopes were stimulated by the Coral Sea and Midway battles and the thousand plane raids on Germany, three-fifths of the people in one sample interviewed by the Bureau of Intelligence thought that the war would be over in two years or less. In July, after the fall of Tobruk and Sevastopol, and the rapid advance of the Germans through Southern Russia, only two-fifths of the sample held to this belief.

The overemphasis on Russia's winter successes could have hardly failed to affect the thinking of many of those who recognize the importance of her role in the struggle of the United Nations against the Axis. This includes a substantial proportion of the American public. As previous Bureau of Intelligence publications have reported, almost one-third of a group of people interviewed by the Bureau in July thought that America's prospects of victory would be reduced by the defeat of Russia. An even larger number, fully half of those interviewed, and more than two-thirds of those with an opinion on the question, felt that the war would be greatly prolonged in the event that Russia was knocked out.

It cannot be demonstrated that the inaccurate presentation of the Russian winter offensive induced widespread overoptimism and complacency. The damage which might have been done was reduced by two important factors:

1. Discouraging reverses in the Pacific area, upon which America's attention was riveted.

2. The failure of many people to appreciate the critical and central role of Russia in the war.

Pearl Harbor sobered and chastened the nation, and throughout the winter and spring there followed a devastating succession of defeats: the fall of Hong Kong, Manila, Singapore, Java and Bataan. While such disasters were being experienced, there was little danger of people becoming over-optimistic. The emphasis put on the Russian offensive may have averted discouragement and defeatism. On the other hand, Americans might have been more grim and determined than they were, if the Russian campaign had not been presented in such a manner as to raise their hopes unduly.

Many people, however, were immune to the distortion of the news from Russia simply because they were unaware of the crucial importance of Russia's role in the war. As pointed out above, one-third of the public felt that the complete defeat of Russia would change the outcome of the war. But it is equally necessary to observe that the remaining two-thirds did not think that it would. Similarly, it is significant that half of those interviewed either did not believe that the defeat of Russia would prolong the war or had no opinion about the matter. In July, Bureau of Intelligence interviewers expressed surprise at the infrequent references people made to the Russian reverses and at their apparent lack of effect on people's thinking. Fewer than one person in ten showed real anxiety over Russia's situation.

This failure to experience concern about Russian summer reverses may itself have stemmed in part from complacency generated by winter news. But in part the lack of appreciation of Russia's importance is a result of her geographical remoteness. Americans lack the information to follow the

progress of the war in such a distant portion of the world. They cannot appreciate the significance of the loss of a given area because they lack facts about its people and its resources. The fall of Russia's great cities does not have the emotional impact that marked the occupation of Paris and the bombing of London.

Hostility toward Russia, as well as ignorance, causes us to discount her as an ally. Despite admiration for her courageous resistance to Hitler, there is a widespread feeling — a heritage perhaps of the way Russian developments have been presented to America ever since the Revolution -- that she cannot be trusted. Many people still feel that Russia may make a separate peace with Hitler. A majority feels that she cannot be trusted to cooperate with the United States after the war. This distrust makes it difficult for people to identify themselves with the struggle of the Russian people.

Such factors as these reduced the damage which might have been done by overoptimistic accounts of the Russian winter offensive, but it is certain that some damage was done. And it is important to recognize that, under another set of conditions, the impact of a distorted presentation of a military campaign might be aggravated rather than lessened by developments in other areas. The objective of informational policy must be the most accurate presentation of events which knowledge of them and security considerations permit.

PREVENTION

The distortion of the Russian winter offensive could probably have been prevented. There is reason to believe that American military authorities and Federal informational agencies appreciated the limited nature of

the Russian successes. U. S. Army news digests, through their selection of material, put a sober appraisal on the situation on the Eastern front. The War This Week, confidentially circulated within the Government by the Office of the Coordinator of Information (now the Office of Strategic Services) consistently minimized Russian gains. The February 5-12 issue maintained:

> "After two weeks of 'victory by communique,' the Russians still appear to have breached no essential part of the German defensive system on the eastern front, and military advisers to the Swedish government believe that the Soviets have made no genuine advance in the past ten days. The key points in the Nazi system — Novgorod, Rzhev, Vyazma, Bryansk, Orel, and Kharkov -- are still held by strong German forces."*

The analysis pointed out that Russian pressure had probably forced the Germans to utilize divisions they had intended to keep in reserve, but concluded that the process had not been "extensive enough to cause any real weakening of German offensive strength next spring."

A discussion in the April 2-9 issue amounted to an indirect protest at the treatment the Russian offensive was receiving in the American press:

> "For approximately a month there have been no real changes on the Russian front. Competent American observers, who have consistently stressed the fact that the Soviet counter-offensive this winter succeeded in wresting no vital strong points from German control, now believe that there is little likelihood of any further Russian gains. Recent newspaper stories -- such as the accounts of 'fierce fighting' in the Donets and Kalinin sectors — printed with banner headlines and then a day or two later quietly dropped without sequel or confirmation, seem to be frequently the joint product of journalistic bull-sessions, working on the flimsiest evidence.
>
> "The initiative on the Russian front will apparently soon be in German hands. It seems unlikely that there will be further movement of any magnitude until the Nazis choose to launch a spring offensive."*

* Quoted by permission

Federal informational agencies were alert to the possibility that Germany was deliberately attempting to maximize its reverses, the difficulties the Reichswehr faced in Russia, and troubles on the home front. Two confidential analyses submitted to the Office of Facts and Figures, for example, as well as one prepared within the organization, agreed that Hitler's speech of April 26 did not necessarily indicate that he felt threatened by disintegration of morale within Germany. One analysis, submitted by a staff member of the Office of the Coordinator of Information, is worth quoting at some length:

> "Hitler knows and must know that such remarks as these will be interpreted abroad as evidence of weakening morale. It is not unreasonable to suppose that this effect was deliberately aimed at. So far as the home front is concerned, he wanted to broadcast to the widest possible audience that inefficiency and half hearted support of the war will no longer be tolerated... The speech is not evidence of cracking German morale. It aims at stiffening morale at home... It would make nonsense to say that it must have a demoralizing effect on Germans... If Hitler's mechanism for feeling public opinion tells him that a dose of terror will strengthen German morale, he will not hesitate.
>
> "...the speech aims at exactly opposite effects at home and abroad..."

No real effort appears to have been made, however, to insure that these more realistic military and ideological analyses would govern the treatment of the Russian campaign in American media. Either our own military and informational authorities lacked complete confidence in them or there was no policy and mechanism at this early stage of the war effort for preventing misinterpretations of important war developments in newspapers and other media.

In any case, no effective steps were taken to protect the public from a distorted and misleading presentation of the Russian campaign.

An informational policy which would have stubbornly resisted any deliberate falsification of the news, to induce either optimism or pessimism, was nevertheless guilty of the negative sin of permitting a dangerous and damaging misinterpretation of events to dominate public consciousness.

CONCLUSIONS

The treatment of the Russian winter offensive demonstrates that an informational policy founded upon the strategy of truth must be equally concerned with two objectives. As is widely recognized, it must strive for maximum accuracy in the presentation of news from American sources. But it is also important that it concern itself with the accurate interpretation of news originating in enemy, neutral and even allied countries.

Because wishful thinking is a constant danger, special efforts must be made to guard against overoptimistic interpretations. Exhortations against overoptimism, while they may occasionally be necessary and helpful, are not alone sufficient. In addition, it is necessary to see that there is not an unwarranted diffusion of optimistic news and that good news is not exaggerated or overemphasized.

In this instance, for example, more attention should have been given by those in charge of information policy to the trend of what was being said to the American people about the strength of Russia and Germany. The ratio of optimistic to pessimistic statements with regard to all key war issues deserves continuing attention. A ratio that is too high or too low, a sudden shift in emphasis, should suggest the need for caution. Imbalance in the headlines is a particular source of danger. The steady, resolute prosecution of the war is clearly endangered by presentations of the news

which violently fluctuate between extremes.

Continuing emphasis should be put on combatting Axis propaganda. Constant vigilance is, of course, necessary in the interpretation of news from abroad. There appear to be promising possibilities, too, in making Americans more aware of the principles and techniques of Axis propaganda, so that they can be on their guard against it.

Guidance to American media in interpreting specific events offers perhaps the most important means of safeguarding the public against over-optimism and the tricks of Axis propaganda. What appears to be most needed is background information which will help editors and commentators to see an event accurately and in its true perspective. Such information will facilitate the correct interpretation of events and reduce the likelihood of too much importance being attached to any one development. Off-the-record conferences, official appraisals of events by military spokesmen and civilian officials, and confidential newsletters to editors and commentators all present promising possibilities for putting an accurate interpretation upon events. There is good evidence that editors and commentators would welcome guidance of this sort.

SOURCES OF THE REPORT

This report is based on the following material:

"The 'Battle of Russia' and American Opinion," and appendixes, Source Materials Division, August 29, 1942
"Reactions to Russian Reverses," Division of Surveys, Special Report #18, August 5, 1942
"Effect of a Russian Defeat on the Progress of the War," Extensive Surveys Division, Special Report #16, August 21, 1942
"Trends in American Public Opinion Since Pearl Harbor," Bureau of Intelligence Report, September 11, 1942
Weekly Media Report No. 32, Part III
"American Reaction to News From Axis Sources," Special Services Division, Report #25

Certain of the above reports are available to authorized individuals through the Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of War Information.

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OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

WASHINGTON

September 19, 1942

My dear Miss Tully:

I am enclosing a copy of INTELLIGENCE REPORT 41 which was prepared for the Director of the Office of War Information.

Sincerely yours,

R. Keith Kane

R. Keith Kane
Chief, Bureau of Intelligence

Miss Grace Tully
Secretary
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

FOR VICTORY
BUY
UNITED STATES
WAR
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INTELLIGENCE REPORT 41

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The Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of War Information uses a variety of procedures and techniques to obtain its data on the attitudes of people and on what is brought to their attention. These procedures and techniques have been found reliable after extensive experimentation over a period of years.

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ATTENTION FOCUS

The attention of the American public was predominantly directed during the week to the following topics:

Fighting Fronts

Battle of Stalingrad
Japanese advances in New Guinea
British action in Madagascar
Joint RAF and Russian air raids on Germany
Japanese counterattacks in the Solomons

The Domestic Front

The Baruch report and rubber saving
Congressional action on the President's anti-inflation message
Tax proposals
Motor transport control
The President's ban on double pay for Sundays

Media of information placed their chief emphasis on war news — most of it optimistic in tone, with the exception of reports from Stalingrad. But the fate of the American motorist drew attention second only to the fate of the Red Army.

EDITORIAL ATTITUDES

THE WEEK

Domestic Problems

Commentators turned this week to discussion of the manner in which Congress should act on the President's anti-inflation proposals. Fulmination subsided over the propriety of the President's threat to act without congressional consent. It appears generally assumed now that Congress will meet the President's demands — and do so with reasonable speed.

A strong minority of editors insist that Congress give the President

no blank check. Some newspapers, notably those in the Scripps-Howard chain, urge that Congress draft specific measures for wage freezing or stabilization, along with its action on farm prices.

The rubber report submitted by the Baruch committee was greeted everywhere with eulogies. Almost all commentators considered it in some measure an indictment of Administration policy; some credited the President with courage and candor for his endorsement and publication of the committee's findings.

The report gave Administration opponents an opportunity to underscore their criticism of the Government's conduct of the war. Arthur Krock, in the New York Times, for example, called it "a powerful indictment of weak, inefficient and unmanaged administration." Among friendlier commentators, the Chicago Sun said: "There can be no quarrel with this report except as to its date. It should have been requested and rendered months ago." The particular point of the report which evoked most indignation was its exposure of the Government's failure to utilize Soviet synthetic rubber processes. A number of papers exhorted the President to keep Mr. Baruch in the forefront of the war effort.

Diplomatic Affairs

There was a revival of attention during the week to the problem of India. Prime Minister Churchill's pronouncement drew considerable criticism. The Raleigh News and Observer, for example, said it "indicated that the Churchill party in Britain is still too imperialistic to justify its proclamations that it is fighting a war for democracy." The Louisville Courier-Journal captioned an editorial, "Churchill Shows How Not to Handle India." The Kansas City Star remarked "... it is evident that Mr. Churchill

still thinks essentially in terms of the old British imperialism." Opinion seems divided, however, over the wisdom of American intervention in the Indian controversy.

A number of commentators discussed recent events in France as portending an outright break between the United States and the Vichy Government. There was warm applause for the declaration made by Edouard Herriot and Jules Jeanneney and outraged condemnation of Pierre Laval's decree providing for the conscription of French labor for shipment to the Reich.

Battlefronts

The fighting fronts commanded comparatively little editorial attention. Comments on the battle of Stalingrad praised the Russian defense as heroic, but held out little hope that the city can be saved. A Scripps-Howard editorial pointed out that "whatever comes, no American and no Briton can ever forget that the courageous Russians at the Volga have bought the precious months for us to prepare. They have wiped out more Nazis, and tanks and planes, than on all other fronts put together. Hitler's best troops will never march in conquest again -- on the steppes in Russia they are dead, hundreds of thousands of them. In the final battle of this war, whether in one year or many years, that fact may be decisive."

Notes

Newspapers came vigorously to the support of the scrap metal drive. Nearly all of them joined in the campaign with hortatory editorials and gave front page space to collection efforts.

The press is divided on taxation. But most papers agree that they have no use for the President's proposed $25,000 ceiling on incomes.

Commentators are exercised over criticism of American fighting and bombing planes. Most of them tend to rise patriotically to the defense of American aircraft but they seem somewhat uneasy and uncertain about their actual merits.

FIRST REACTIONS TO THE PRESIDENT'S INFLATION MESSAGE

Editorial commentators, for the most part, recognized the President's Labor Day message to Congress and his address to the Nation as precisely what they had been demanding — firm, forthright executive action. "We have asked for positive, vigorous leadership to win the war," declared the Christian Science Monitor. "Here it is. We welcome it."

Both press and radio tended to discuss the message at first in terms of its "ultimatum" to Congress and to speculate on its political effects. The prevailing reaction to the "ultimatum" was one of acceptance — though frequently with certain misgivings. The New York Herald-Tribune declared that "Under any normal conditions, even under ordinary war conditions, the demand on Congress for action by October 1 would have been wholly inadmissible. But under the actual situation of today it comes as a necessary and a salutary shock."

A few newspapers and one or two radio commentators viewed the President's action as unwarrantedly high-handed. The carrying out of his threat to override Congress would be, in the opinion of the Washington Star, "an act of dictatorship pure and simple." To the Chicago Tribune it would be "a coup d'etat." The New York Times wondered if it is "worth breaching the Constitution to secure this difference of 10 per cent in farm prices...." And the Patterson papers warned that Mr. Roosevelt's promise to restore powers to the people "had better be taken with a

grain of salt."

Most commentators agreed that Congress will probably avert the necessity for executive action by proceeding promptly along the lines requested by Mr. Roosevelt. "For the sake of the republic," said the Baltimore Sun, "Congress must pass the price control legislation for which the President asks."

While praising the vigor of the President's statements, a number of editorial writers were inclined to blame him for buck-passing. The specific complaint most frequently directed at Mr. Roosevelt concerned his failure to take any steps toward the stabilization of wages. Some argued that his promise to effect wage stabilization as soon as Congress acted on farm prices was too vague. They urged that Congress itself legislate respecting wages.

In general, it may be inferred from their comments that editors are relieved that the President chose to give Congress a fresh opportunity to cooperate with him. And, above all, they are relieved that real measures to counter the danger of inflation now seem assured.

POPULAR REACTIONS

THE PRESIDENT'S ANTI-INFLATION SPEECH

The President's Labor Day radio address on the inflation problem reached, directly or indirectly, about three-quarters of the American public. In response to questions posed to a small national sample on September 10, 53 per cent said that they heard the President's speech on the air on Labor Day. Twenty-three per cent said they had read the speech itself in the newspapers. Fifty-four per cent said they had read newspaper stories or heard radio broadcasts about the

speech. Through one or another of these channels, a total of 74 per cent of the public secured some knowledge of the President's anti-inflation proposals.

Those people who said that they knew about the President's speech were asked, "As a whole, did you approve of what the President said, or not?" Eighty-five per cent of them (63 per cent of the whole sample) expressed approval. The particular aspect of the President's words which most impressed his listeners was that he would undertake executive action himself against the danger of inflation in the event that Congress should fail to adopt the necessary measures by October 1. Comparatively few singled out the portion of the speech dealing with military events as its most impressive aspect.

Those familiar with the speech were also asked, "Was there anything in particular in the speech that you didn't like?" Four-fifths of those questioned (three-fifths of the whole sample) answered "No." The few who said that they disliked some portion of it complained that it was "dictatorial" or that it failed to announce strong action on wage stabilization. A very small number objected to the President's views on farm prices.

AWARENESS OF THE INFLATION THREAT

The President's Labor Day message and address were delivered in an atmosphere of general awareness that inflation is now a real danger and that control of both wages and farm prices is needed to keep the danger in check.

The same small national sample interviewed about the President's

speech was asked, "Do you think there is a real danger of the cost of living going so high during the war that we will have a very serious inflation?" The answers were as follows:

Yes	53%
No	33
Don't know	14

The one-third which answered negatively was asked to explain why it saw no real danger of a serious inflation. Almost all of these people answered "Government control" -- indicating that, like the majority, they recognize rising living costs as a menace to our economy unless they are effectively arrested. Thus at least four-fifths of the whole public may be said to have a real recognition of the need for vigorous governmental action to prevent inflation.

This conclusion is bolstered by the answers to another question posed to the sample: "Do you think it is necessary to control both wages and farm prices in order to keep the cost of living from going so high that we will have a serious inflation?" The answers were:

Necessary	87%
Not necessary	7
Don't know	6

GROUP LEADER ATTITUDES TOWARD INFLATION CONTROL

The President's second anti-inflation message came at a time when the leaders of competing economic groups were ready, and even uneasily eager, for drastic steps to regulate wages and farm prices. Labor, farm and business leaders have displayed a growing sense of urgency based on a recognition that inflation control to date has been inadequate. All of them demand

action on the entire anti-inflation front, even though they know that such action must affect their own group interests. None of the group leaders voiced any doubt that inflation can be brought under control by vigorous governmental action.

These views constitute a digest of opinions expressed by more than 800 spokesmen for farm, labor, business and civic groups interviewed, off the record, during the latter part of August by field representatives of the Bureau of Public Inquiry. The readiness which members of each group expressed for anti-inflation measures was tempered by an insistence that their special interests be protected against any sacrifices not imposed upon rival groups. No doubt the readiness for regulation which the leaders manifested was due, in part, to a desire to voice patriotic sentiments. All of the group leaders naturally continue to jockey for concessions favorable to their own interests.

Agricultural spokesmen were insistent that the imposition of price controls on farm products be accompanied by strict wage regulation. They exhibited a rather bitter feeling that the Administration is "coddling" labor. They were critical of high war industry wages and fearful that farm labor will be drained away to the cities.

Labor leaders expressed strong dissatisfaction over price control, especially in relation to food products, and insisted that wage stabilization be flexible. They recognized that wage controls are inevitable, but insisted that sub-standard wages be raised and that wage adjustments keep pace with the cost of living. They expressed fear that wage control might weaken collective bargaining and undermine the strength of labor unions. All labor spokesmen vigorously opposed a sales tax and urged strict curbs on profits. The increase in Eugene Grace's salary was frequently mentioned

as a sore point. The $25,000 limitation on individual salaries is generally regarded by these men as a symbol of equality of sacrifice.

Business leaders showed less concern about farm prices than about wage stabilization. A majority of them expressed recognition of the need for flexibility in wage control to permit adjustment of sub-standard wages and other inequalities. Although more and more vocal in demanding a sales tax, they think of it as a revenue, rather than as an anti-inflation, measure.

Group leaders believe that anti-inflation measures should be presented with emphasis on patriotism — as the contribution to the war effort of the home front battleline. The next most effective appeal, in their minds, is self-preservation — the danger of inflation to the individual pocketbook. They agree that inflation control will be accepted in a healthy spirit if it is put into effect among all groups simultaneously and equitably.

THE ECONOMIC "INFORMATIONAL GAP"

The anti-inflation program is threatened not only by the inflationary gap but also by an informational gap — a lack of awareness of the program's objectives and operation. Although the public, as reported above, is now awake to the threat of spiraling prices and to the need for governmental action, interviews conducted by the Bureau of Intelligence in late July and early August revealed that many people do not appreciate either the interrelation of factors in the economic situation or the growing necessity for personal sacrifices. If the anti-inflation program is to succeed, a difficult informational job still looms ahead.

Ignorance of the price control program is astonishingly widespread. One-fifth of all those interviewed did not know that such a program was in operation. Half of the sample had little or no specific information about it. Three respondents in ten expressed the belief that under the maximum price regulation, prices are supposed to be the same in all stores. An equally large number believed that price ceilings applied to certain commodities actually not covered or that they were intended to apply to all commodities without exception. Some respondents believed that all prices are supposed to be lowered, but showed no awareness of the March base. One mischievous result of these misconceptions is that some people believe that storekeepers are chiseling when in fact they are not.

Erroneous notions about regulations were also partly responsible for undermining faith in price control. The proportion of people who felt confident that price control would work decreased between May and August. The President's Labor Day speech was well-timed in view of this skepticism. The drive to extend price control to more farm products should also be helpful, since it is among the low income group, most of whose money is spent for food, that doubts about the feasibility of price control are most pronounced. It is this group whose welfare most vitally depends upon the successful operation of price regulation.

People exhibited even less knowledge of rent control than of price control. In areas where rent control is under federal administration, only about half the people knew that there was a program. In the so-called "designated areas," where voluntary local commissions are responsible for administration, only about a fifth of the people knew there was a program. In these areas control has been less effective and increases

prior to the inauguration of control less spectacular than in the boom areas under federal supervision. A subsidiary but by no means negligible problem in connection with rent control is revealed by the failure of many people who know about the program to report violations of rent ceilings to the proper authorities; they do not understand that the law protects them against the reprisals of landlords.

In their interpretation of wage stabilization, people showed an understandable but none the less dangerous degree of self-interest. Opinions of people at both ends of the economic scale — and even their very conception of what stabilization means — are demonstrably influenced by their own situation. Most of the spontaneous demand for wage control was concentrated among people at the upper socio-economic level.

Among workers, many misconceptions about wage stabilization were prevalent. Many war workers now earning high wages interpreted it to mean holding wages at present levels; they viewed it as a kind of economic guarantee, rather than as a ceiling or a means of accomplishing a broad economic objective. Some workers not earning good money believed that regulation of wages meant wage equalization, with wages pegged at the highest prevailing rate for a particular kind of work. Many workers thought of wage stabilization as involving the adjustment of wages to the cost of living.

Ignorance and misconceptions, for which self-interest is partially responsible, were also prevalent in people's views with regard to rationing. Although respondents approved the general idea of rationing, there was less enthusiasm for specific rationing programs, particularly when they involved some personal inconvenience. Rural people, for example, were considerably less inclined to endorse rationing than were city

dwellers — perhaps because tires, gasoline and sugar, the items now rationed, play so large a part in agricultural life.

In part because there has been no difficulty in getting goods so far, and in part because America is regarded as a land of plenty, people refuse to accept the fact that shortages exist or impend which will compel them to accept a lower standard of living. There is some expectation that imported goods will become scarce as a result of ship sinkings and military demands, but practically no awareness of the fact that the conversion of the nation's economy to a war basis involves a reduction in the supply of civilian goods.

There is little understanding of the interrelationship of the component parts of the anti-inflation program. The average person thinks of his purchasing in relation to his income and his needs and not as a factor in forcing prices up. He buys bonds as a means of aiding the war effort and as a good investment, not as a means of thwarting inflation. His conception of wage stabilization reveals that he does not think of it as a part of a general program for combatting the danger of inflation. His approval of the equitable distribution of goods assured by rationing is based on ethical considerations, not on any fear of what would happen economically if people bid against one another with their expanding purchasing power for a limited supply of goods.

These gaps in public understanding of the anti-inflation program are not too injurious now, because the program has demanded little of people thus far in the way of sacrifices. But they leave people ill prepared for the demands which must be made upon them in the future. They make enforcement of the anti-inflation program more difficult and generate skepticism

about its feasibility. Most important of all, they threaten the enthusiastic cooperation with the program upon which its success ultimately depends. The most vigorous informational efforts are indicated to make America sufficiently literate economically to appreciate not only the what but also the why of the imperatives which lie ahead.

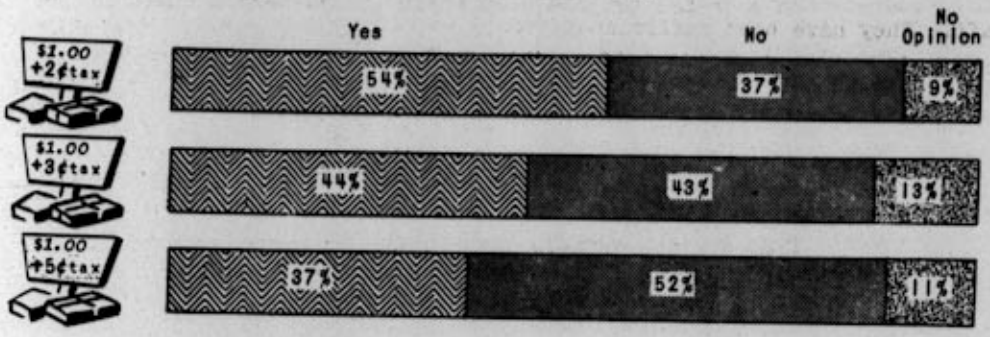
(For further details see "Public Responses to Economic Controls," Report #24, Division of Surveys, available upon request to the Bureau of Intelligence.)

SALES TAXES AND WAR BONDS

Popular reaction to federal sales tax proposals depends, to a considerable degree, upon the rate at which the tax may be levied. Approval of this form of taxation is in inverse ratio to the tax rate: the lower the tax, the greater the proportion of popular favor it elicits.

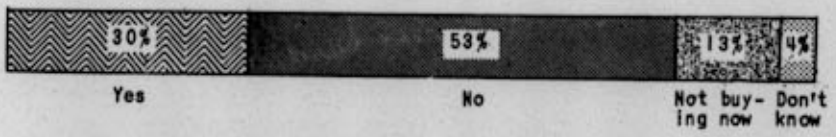
The chart below shows the division of public opinion in response to three questions respecting sales tax levies at different rates posed to three national samples. The questions in regard to a two per cent and a three per cent sales tax were asked by the American Institute of Public Opinion during the latter part of August in these terms: "In order to help pay the cost of the war, should the Federal Government put a national sales tax of three per cent on everything that people buy? (For example, three cents on every purhcase of one dollar)"; the question regarding a two per cent tax was in the same phraseology. The Bureau of Intelligence on September 10 posed a question about a five per cent tax in slightly different terms: "Would you favor or oppose having the Government put a five per cent sales tax on everything that people buy?"

SHOULD WE HAVE A FEDERAL SALES TAX ?



A general sales tax, unlike a payroll deduction tax, may have adverse effects upon voluntary war bond purchases. As previously reported, only a very small percentage of people who were interviewed about the effect of systematic deductions from their earnings for the payment of federal income taxes felt that these would compel them to reduce their customary purchase of war bonds. More than half of the public, however, says that the imposition of a five per cent general sales tax would involve a reduction in the amount of war bonds they could afford to buy. The question asked and the responses were as follows:

IF YOU HAD TO PAY A 5 CENT SALES TAX OUT OF EVERY DOLLAR YOU SPENT, COULD YOU BUY THE SAME AMOUNT OF WAR BONDS AND STAMPS YOU ARE BUYING NOW ?



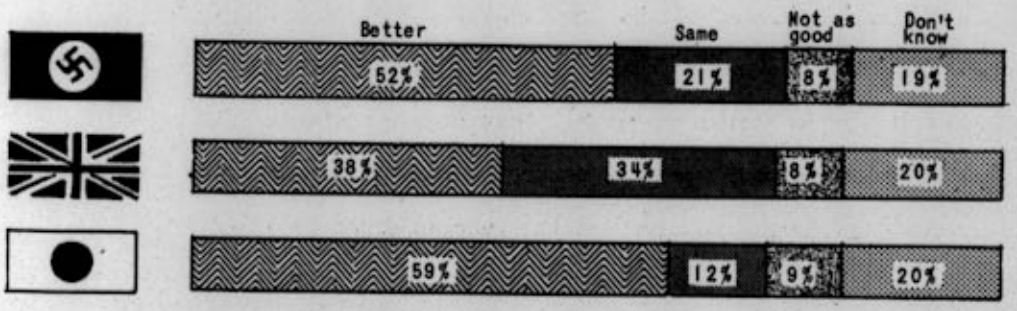
CONFIDENCE IN AMERICAN COMBAT PLANES

A number of commentators and unofficial aviation "experts", notably

Lieutenant Al Williams and Major de Seversky, have been vigorously critical of the design and performance of American military and naval aircraft. They have been sufficiently vocal to elicit rather sharp rejoinders from such authorities as Generals Arnold and Brett, who extolled the quality of American flying machines. In order to determine popular reaction to this controversy, the Bureau of Intelligence asked its small sample of September 10 this question: "Have you read or heard anything about our fighter planes not being as good as the German or Japanese or English planes?" The affirmative and negative answers were evenly divided, 50-50.

When the sample was asked to express opinions regarding the merits of our fighter planes as compared with those of Germany, England and Japan, it became apparent that the criticism had engendered doubts respecting our aircraft in the minds of only a small minority of the public. There is an apparent tendency toward chauvinism among Americans respecting the quality of planes made in the U. S. A. They are more ready to acknowledge that British planes are equal to our own than that German or Japanese planes can match our fighters.

HOW DO OUR FIGHTER PLANES COMPARE WITH OTHERS ?



The preceding chart shows how American opinion divides about our combat planes in comparison with those of other countries. The question asked was: "Do you think our fighter planes are better than Germany's (England's, Japan's) or about the same, or not as good?"

Nazi Terror Propaganda for Home Consumption

Evidence of the effectiveness of the Nazi propaganda campaign to convince the German population that the war means "victory or destruction" for them comes this week from the Soviet Information Bureau. Two German air officers told their Russian captors of the plan for the post-war sterilization of the German population which has been recommended by Theodore N. Kaufman in a volume published in the United States, Germany Must Perish. These airmen spoke as though the Kaufman plan for a large surgical staff to perform sterilization operations upon the entire German population in the age ranges of fertility was settled American policy. The German prisoners were described as full of hate for Americans and "determined to fight a life and death struggle against them."

Such a plan, while fantastic to most Americans, might seem plausible in Germany where "eugenic sterilization" has been an accepted matter of Nazi ideology and administration for a number of years. German soldiers and civilians convinced of the truth of an allegedly official American plan to destroy the German nation through sterilization will, of course, be more likely to resist to death. What is particularly interesting in the Soviet Information Bureau's report is that this propaganda is being used among the German soldiers on the Russian front in an effort to make the losses there seem tame in comparison with the consequences of German defeat.

That such internal terror propaganda is deliberately used in Germany in order to bring the war effort to maximum pitch is reflected in a recent Das Reich article of Goebbels, who complains that only "certain circles" in Germany have been taught the "meaning of being a world nation." The great mass of Germans are described as suffering from "super-objectivity" and "bourgeois humanity." "We Germans must still learn to hate."

Goebbels' article indicates that despite the many years of Nazi hate propaganda, more skepticism and humanitarianism exist among Germans than is desired by their leaders. To overcome such tendencies and to incite the German soldiers and civilians to the maximum level of effort this campaign of propaganda terror has been instituted. American information policy has the task of appealing to these susceptibilities and counteracting the terror.

The Axis Beckons Youth

Baldur Von Schirach, Nazi youth leader, attempted to counteract the effects of President Roosevelt's speech to the youth of the world by denouncing the President in a speech on September 4. He asserted that the President had no right to speak to youth since American youth are allegedly hungry, illiterate, unemployed and immoral. The Axis mobilized declarations of protest from the "Youth Leaders" of Axis and Axis-dominated countries. In an even greater effort to win the youth of the world to the Axis, European youth representatives were gathered in Vienna during September 14-18 to establish a "European Youth Association" which is to "represent a contribution of the youth of our continent to the New Order in Europe." Von Schirach

addressed this group on September 14, describing the "Adolf Hitler School" as the "Revolution in Education" with the watchword of "Social Justice." Excoriating Roosevelt as "the reactionary who plunged the youth of the world into a war," Von Schirach cunningly appealed to the idealism of world youth, trying to persuade them that they are the victims of an American "materialism" which pitted them against each other. He offered them a new union in which they can defend Europe's "ageless values" against the "sterile continent" of America.

AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENTS

The most significant official document during the week was the report of the Baruch Committee. By its clarity, coherence, and force it immediately cleared a fog of controversy. The substance of the Baruch report had been presented previously in congressional committee hearings and elsewhere, but had been overlaid with contradictory statements from other sources to such an extent that there was no general confidence in any given data on the problem.

Confusion has been noted in recent statements on manpower, and on cargo requirements for overseas forces. The complete confusion on the military manpower situation has not arisen from flatly contradictory statements, so much as from a very loose use of undefined terms by all spokesmen, generating a mass of misconstructions.

The period covered by this report is the week of September 9 through September 15, except where otherwise specifically stated

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

WASHINGTON

file

September 26, 1942

My dear Miss Tully:

I am enclosing a copy of INTELLIGENCE REPORT 42 which was prepared for the Director of the Office of War Information.

Sincerely yours,

R. Keith Kane
Chief, Bureau of Intelligence

Miss Grace Tully
Secretary
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

PSF
OWI

9·25·42

INTELLIGENCE REPORT 42

CONFIDENTIAL

This document contains information relating to the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, as amended, U. S. Code 50, Sections 31 and 32. Its transmission or communication in any manner to any unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

OFFICE OF
WAR INFORMATION

BUREAU OF
INTELLIGENCE

COPY No. 2

Such recommendations and suggestions as may appear in this report have not been cleared in advance with the Director of the Office of War Information and do not necessarily reflect his views or those of the Office of War Information. Recommendations and suggestions, if they do appear, are only submitted by individuals in the Bureau of Intelligence who have assembled the data and they are offered for the consideration of appropriate authorities.

The Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of War Information uses a variety of procedures and techniques to obtain its data on the attitudes of people and on what is brought to their attention. These procedures and techniques have been found reliable after extensive experimentation over a period of years.

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The period covered by this report is the week of September 16 through September 22, except where otherwise specifically stated

OWI
9-25-42

ATTENTION FOCUS

Public interest during the past week was directed primarily to the following topics:

Fighting Fronts

Battle of Stalingrad
Fighting in the Solomons
RAF raids on Germany
Japanese advances in New Guinea
American submarine sinkings of Japanese ships
Army plane attacks on the Aleutians

The Domestic Front

Congressional action on inflation control
The drive for scrap materials
The appointment of an administrator for the rubber problem
Fuel rationing

Stalingrad dominated the news to an even greater extent than in preceding weeks; though German advances were not denied, stories stressed every hopeful aspect of the Russian defense. Reports of fighting in the Solomons and in New Guinea were also presented optimistically. The RAF raids on Germany and the American air attack on the Aleutians were dramatized as crushing blows. Domestic events received only secondary attention in the news media.

EDITORIAL ATTITUDES

Second Front

Leading editorial commentators have revived consideration of the second front problem in a new atmosphere. Some of them are manifestly uneasy that Anglo-American failure to undertake this venture in the near future may undermine the relations between

Russia and the other members of the United Nations.

The sense of a rift between Russia and her allies was brought into the open by Prime Minister Churchill's report to Commons concerning his talk with Stalin and by the statement of a foreign diplomatic authority in London, commonly imputed to Ambassador Maisky. "It is now clear," observed Dorothy Thompson, "that there is an open conflict between the Anglo-American world and Russia." Miss Thompson asked rhetorically if Russia, during the last months, had been encouraged to think that we would open a second front. And she answered this question with an emphatic affirmative.

Over the air during the week, Raymond Gram Swing expressed uneasiness on the same account. "It is obvious," he remarked, "that the studied ambiguity of the statement issued after Mr. Molotov's visit is cause for real trouble, for it was made to mean one thing to the Russian people, and one thing only. It may have fooled and worried the Germans, but it would not be good practice to fool the enemy if it involves fooling your own side."

The heroism of the Russian resistance at Stalingrad evoked universal praise. A number of commentators noted, however, that praise is not what the Soviet Union now needs. They, too, are uneasy over the apparent friction between the allies and agree that we must make every effort to convince the Russian people that we are doing everything possible to relieve them without jeopardizing final victory.

Only a minority of the current comments openly demand a second front. But a considerable number of them discuss uneasily the consequences which may follow from a failure to attempt invasion now. The Christian Science Monitor, for example, declared: "By spring the costs of a second front could be doubled or trebled. And is it certain that it will then be the

second, rather than the first front? Admittedly, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill must calculate carefully American and British interests, as well as Russia's. But too often in the past a self-centered lack of imagination, of courage and of willingness to fight for the welfare of all has given the Nazis victory. Today Britain and America must regard any loss of Russia's as their own. The military strength of the United Nations is one common reservoir; it should be exerted in concert."

The Canadian Government's announcement of the severe losses suffered in the Dieppe raid promoted sober analysis of the problems involved in opening a second front. The prevailing judgment appears to be that, while heavy casualties must be expected, an invasion effort is still feasible.

South Pacific

Japanese advances in New Guinea have produced a good deal of editorial shock and chagrin. There was general agreement that, if Port Moresby should fall, the Solomon Islands victory would be hollow; cries for explanations began to appear. Commentators warned their readers that the defense of Port Moresby will now be extremely difficult and that a large-scale Japanese effort to retake the Solomon Islands must be expected.

The disappointment about the situation in the Pacific was apparently intensified by Admiral Blandy's statement that the United States now holds the balance of striking power in that area. Skepticism regarding the Admiral was accompanied by the first expressions of doubt as to the infallibility of General MacArthur. The New York Herald-Tribune declared that "The only thing in doubt about Port Moresby again is the leadership of the forces which have had to surrender their strong defensive positions on

the high ridges of the Owen Stanley range, to Japanese who exhibited no new accomplishment, except their ability to keep their supplies moving up to their front lines as fast as they needed them, over all geographical obstacles." Even the Chicago Tribune, which has continually praised General MacArthur, called upon him to send reinforcements to New Guinea instead of lecturing his troops on defensive warfare.

The Anti-Inflation Program

A majority of editorial comment on the anti-inflation program gave at least qualified approval to the bill introduced by Senators Brown and Wagner in the Senate and condemned the Steagall proposal in the House. Eastern papers were united in their opposition to any upward revision of the parity standard.

Some of the leading midwestern newspapers, however, veered suddenly into the farm bloc camp, supporting the Steagall formula and expressing uneasiness over wages. Among these were the Kansas City Star and the Omaha World-Herald. They agreed with the Daily Oklahoman that "It is not the arbitrary reduction of his income that the farmer objects to.... it is the manifest injustice of the proposed program that stirs his resentment..."

The WLB decision in the General Motors case, and the testimony of WLB chairman Davis before the Senate Banking Committee, aroused a number of papers to charge that labor is still being favored as opposed to agriculture.

The Senate committee's "victory tax" proposal received a drubbing from the press, attacks coming chiefly from sales tax proponents. The proposal was considered preferable to the Treasury's "spending tax" of last week, but was generally condemned on the ground that it would not siphon off enough excess buying power.

In addition to ending the confusion as to the status of our rubber supply, the Baruch Report has virtually wiped out newspaper opposition to nation-wide gas rationing. A single well-timed and convincing statement has almost completely disposed of what was a controversial issue.

POPULAR REACTIONS

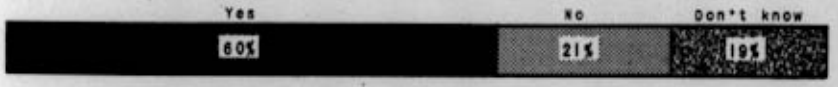
Second Front

A majority of the American people believes that the allies should attempt to invade the continent of Europe within the next two or three months, that they actually will do so within this period and that the attempt has a good possibility of success. Illustrated below are the answers given by a national sample to questions on this subject asked by the Bureau of Intelligence during the first half of September:

Do you think in the next two or three months the Allies should try to land an army on the continent of Europe for a real invasion?

If the Allies do try this invasion in the next two or three months, do you think our chances of winning a foothold are pretty good, about 50-50, or that we're more likely to fail than succeed?

Do you think the Allies actually will try to land an army in Europe in the next two or three months for a real invasion?



It should be noted that these questions were asked after completion of the large-scale commando raid on Dieppe, but prior to the Canadian announcement that casualties in the raid amounted to two out of every three men involved. The people who said that the invasion should be attempted were very much inclined to believe that it has a lively chance of success: Sixty-eight per cent of them rated this chance as "pretty good," while 27 per cent rated it as "50-50"; only one per cent of the proponents said they thought it would fail, 4 per cent admitting that they didn't know. Even among those opposed to opening a second front, more than half felt that it stood an even chance or better of succeeding.

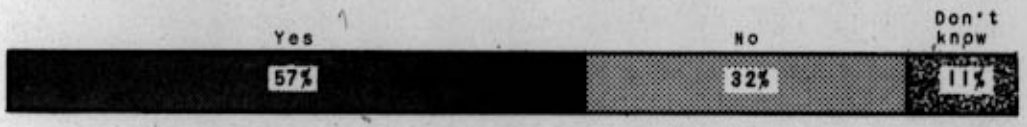
Conversely, among the people who felt that the chances for success in an invasion effort were pretty good, 73 per cent believed that it should be attempted. And among those who thought that the venture represented an even gamble, 54 per cent were in favor of making a try at it. Among the people believing that an invasion effort would be likely to fail, only nine per cent said it should be undertaken.

Somewhat similar questions respecting the desirability and feasibility of an invasion effort were posed to a small national sample at the end of July. A comparison of the results secured then with the responses given to the interviewing in September indicate a slight decrease in ardor for a second front, accompanied by a slight increase in the belief that it could be opened successfully.

The desire for an allied invasion effort is motivated only in part by a conviction that the Russians need such assistance to enable them to withstand the German onslaught in the immediate future. Most Americans express confidence that the Red Army will be able to hold out against

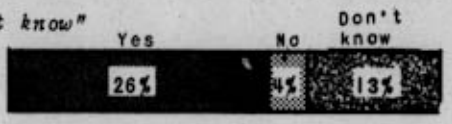
Germany until this winter, even without relief from an allied offensive in the West. The chart below shows the answers given by the sample interviewed in September to questions on this score:

"If Russia does not get more help from the Allies than she is getting now, do you think Russia will be able to hold out against Germany until this winter?"



Asked of those who answered "No" or "Don't know"

"Do you think Russia would be saved if the Allies should land an army in Europe in the next two or three months?"

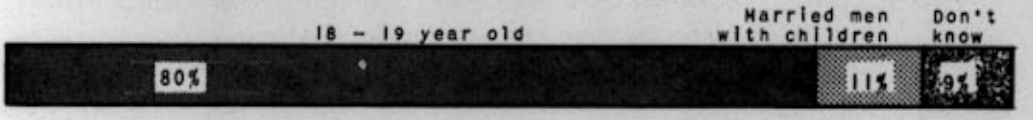


Selective Service

The public appears to be pretty well convinced that its 18- and 19-year old sons will have to be called into the armed services before the war is ended. Seventy per cent answered affirmatively when they were asked the question, "Do you think it will be necessary to draft 18- and 19-year old men before the war is over?" Sixteen per cent said "No" and 14 per cent expressed no opinion.

There is also an overwhelming belief that the drafting of 18- and 19-year old men is preferable to the drafting of married men with children. The following chart illustrates the division of opinion on this topic:

If the Government has to choose between drafting 18 and 19 year old men, or married men with children, which should it choose?



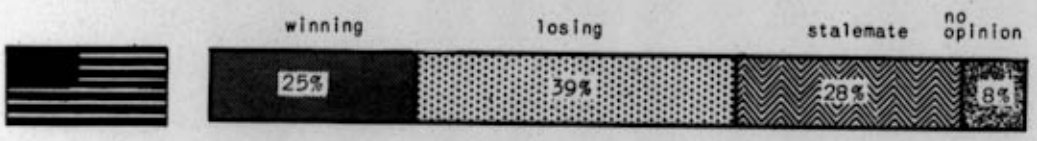
Analysis of these responses shows that women under 40 years of age are slightly more prone than women over 40 to favor the induction of 18- and 19-year old youths in preference to married men with children. Obviously, the younger women are more concerned about their husbands, while the older women tend to worry about their sons. But, in either case, preference for the drafting of the youngsters is expressed by heavy majorities.

The division of opinion shown in the chart represents virtually no change from the answers obtained a month earlier to an almost identical question posed by the American Institute of Public Opinion. As previously reported, 78 per cent expressed a preference for drafting 18- and 19-year olds at that time.

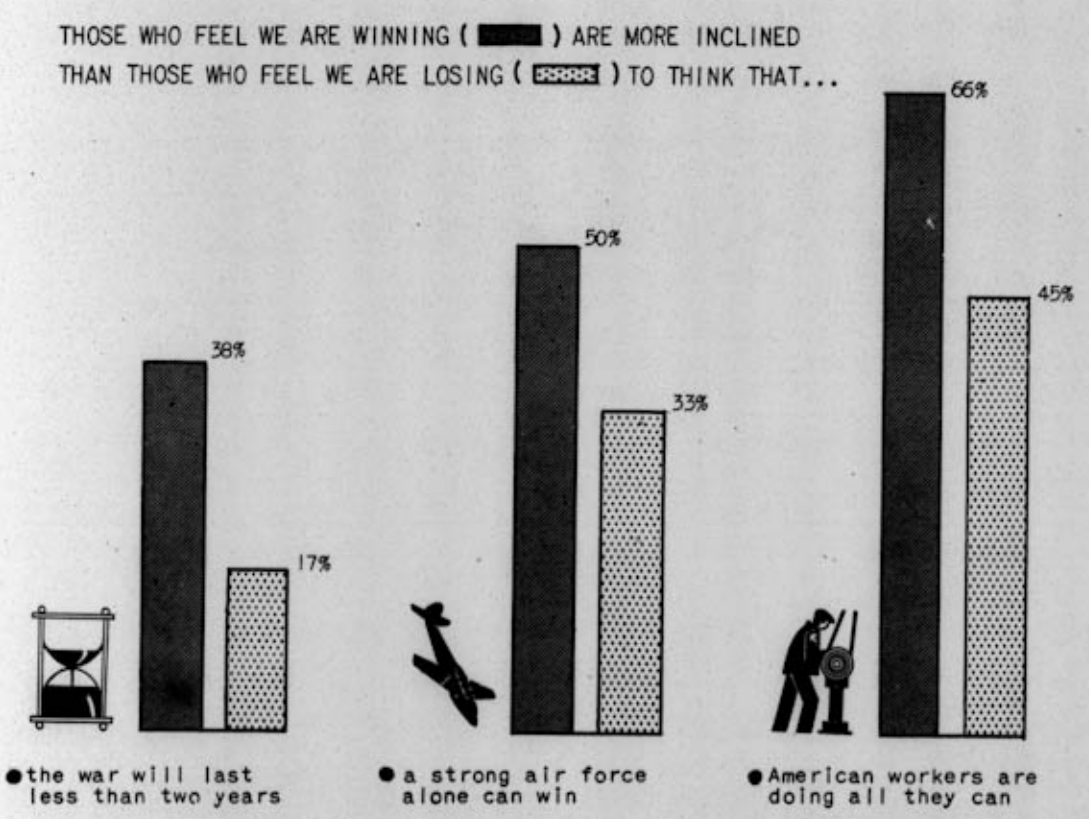
Complacent Minority

Complacency is not an easy attitude to identify and isolate. The Bureau of Intelligence has already asked a number of questions aimed at uncovering easygoing and overconfident outlooks. In late July the Princeton University Office of Public Opinion Research asked a new question which sheds additional light upon the subject of complacency. The question and the responses were as follows:

"THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING RIGHT NOW, DOES IT SEEM TO YOU THAT WE ARE WINNING THE WAR, OR LOSING IT?"



Those who feel we are winning and those who feel we are losing do not differ greatly in their beliefs about the ultimate outcome of the war. Eighty-four per cent of those who believe that we are losing the war now, responses to a second question showed, are just as confident that we will eventually be victorious as are those who think that we are winning it now. Many of those who said that we are winning the war now may have meant merely that, on the whole, things are going in such a way as to lead to victory in the end.



The group which feels that we are winning does appear to be significantly more complacent than the group which feels we are losing. People in this group are much more prone to feel that we will win the war in less than two years -- an outlook often indicative of over-optimism. And they are somewhat more willing to believe that the war can be won by the relatively bloodless method of air attacks, without the necessity of a land invasion. Finally, their views on labor suggest that they are somewhat less critical of the war effort on the domestic front.

Laborers, service people and semi-skilled workers are more likely than professional and business people, white collar workers and skilled laborers to hold this cluster of opinions. It is among these groups, toward the bottom of the income scale, that a tendency toward complacency must be combatted with particular vigor.

DEVELOPING SITUATIONS

Selective Service and Manpower

There is growing popular confusion and resentment over Government handling of policies respecting Selective Service and manpower mobilization in general. Reports received by teletype on September 21 from 28 field offices of the Bureau of Public Inquiry indicate that dissatisfaction has become widespread and has produced unhealthy effects upon morale.

In regard to Selective Service this dissatisfaction is of recent origin. Interviewing conducted in July showed that the public had adapted itself to the inevitability of conscription and was overwhelmingly convinced of the fairness of its operation. But it is now the prevailing

opinion among BPI field observers that serious public irritation has developed over the inconsistencies of local draft boards in extending the Selective Service law to married men, industrial workers and farm labor. The irritation, according to reports, has been aggravated by over-frequent and contradictory statements about manpower by federal, state and local Selective Service officials.

The uncertain situation of married men has caused particular annoyance. Despite official statements that all single men will be called first, married men are inducted in some areas, while single men remain available in others. Uncertainty is preventing many married men from getting jobs in war plants. Great numbers of them, the reports state, are not devoting their main thought to their jobs, but are spending time around recruiting offices angling for specialist ratings.

Field observers concur in the evidence of national interviewing presented elsewhere in this report that the public is overwhelmingly in favor of the induction of the 18- and 19-year old group. The general feeling is that the drafting of these young men is inevitable and is delayed only by politics. Conflicting statements by the President, General Hershey and Congressmen produced a high degree of confusion among the 18- and 19-year olds; they see little point in continuing school or seeking war industry jobs if they are going to be drafted.

Confusion over Selective Service policy in regard to skilled workers has led many of this class to seek commissions or to enlist. Inconsistencies among local draft boards in handling occupational deferments destroys the incentive of skilled workers to transfer from non-essential to

war production employment. Plant managers are alarmed by the loss of skilled workers. They complain that they train men only to lose them to the armed services. One tool plant asserts that it lost 65 men, trained at a cost of $600 each, to the draft; the explanation it received from the Army was "We need welders too." Within a ten-day period, one of the nation's outstanding airplane factories lost 106 men by Selective Service and 110 men by enlistment.

Field reporters find the general public grossly uninformed regarding the nature of the manpower problem in general -- a conclusion which is consistent with findings obtained from interviewing in July. When the public thinks of manpower, it thinks of local labor shortages. The farmer sees the problem in terms of agricultural labor, the war industry employer in terms of the scarcity of skilled help. There is little understanding of the difficulties involved in mobilizing the men and women of the nation on a balanced basis into the armed forces, war industries, agriculture and essential civilian services.

Induction into the armed forces of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, auto mechanics and others supplying essential services has created a condition regarded as harmful to public health, civilian defense and transportation.

As labor shortages become more acute, there appears to be a decrease in the prejudices against employing women in war industries. Considerable confusion exists regarding the part to be played by women. While press and radio carry numerous reports that they will be called upon to serve in war production roles, women are uncertain as to age, experience and education requirements and as to what steps they ought to take. Married women with dependent children are uneasy about the care of their children while they are at work.

With the exception of the South, Southwest and certain war plants in Michigan where large numbers of southerners are employed, there has been an improvement in attitudes toward the hiring of Negroes, aliens and other minorities in war production. Prejudices tend to disappear as the newcomers demonstrate their skill, friendliness and adaptability. But vigorous informational efforts are still needed to overcome hostility toward the employment of these groups.

The tone of current editorial comment on manpower and Selective Service policies strongly encourages popular dissatisfaction. General Hershey's forecast of an Army of 13 million occasioned a flood of criticism. On the basis of it, many newspapers renewed their assertions that industrial and farm labor supplies are being disrupted by drastic, unequal practices of local draft boards. The press, as a whole, disapproved the President's declaration on the calling up of 'teen-age men. The San Francisco Chronicle, for example, called upon him to present the facts to the public and to "tell the draft people to stop trying to drive the nation crazy."

The collective judgment of the BPI field reporters is that the public as a whole now feels dismayed and disheartened over federal failure to announce and implement a firm, consistent policy for the utilization of the nation's manpower in the war effort.

Living Conditions in War Centers

Unsatisfactory living conditions in war production centers continue to generate social tensions and to hamper war production. Frayed nerves were at least partly responsible for the recent blow-off in Mobile, Alabama, which saw 10,000 shipyard workers idle for several days in a dispute

over a five-cent ferry fare. Worker resentment over such an apparently trivial issue can be understood only when one considers the conditions under which they are living.

Many families in Mobile are huddled together in single rooms or living in tents, trailers, shacks or vacated stores. As many as seven men sometimes share one room, occupying the beds in shifts. Some incoming workers are accepting makeshift "housing" in cars and bus stations. Exhorbitant rents are often charged for these miserable accommodations, and prices in general are high. Such conditions inevitably impair the morale and productivity of workers. The men who are compelled to leave their families behind them and forego many of the satisfactions of normal living are especially subject to discontent.

Unsatisfactory living conditions also give rise to community problems. In Mobile, for example, the competition for the available family accommodations is causing friction between incoming war workers and native Mobilians. People who have rented the same homes for years only to have them sold from under them to newly arrived workers are particularly resentful.

Dissatisfaction with living conditions is partly responsible for the high labor turnover in Mobile's shipyards and adds to the difficulty of recruiting additional workers. Within the past few weeks the shipyards adopted a policy of reducing overtime work and establishing eight-hour shifts. A large-scale exodus ensued. Many workers, willing to put up with the numerous inconveniences of life in Mobile so long as high earnings permitted them to save money for an anticipated rainy day, left town as soon as the possibility for a big weekly pay check disappeared. Many of those who stayed on were discontented with the new policy, arguing that not enough

workers were available for three full shifts and that there were no accommodations for newcomers.

Problems similar to Mobile's arise in all communities unable to cope with the influx of new workers. Of several war production centers surveyed early in September by the Bureau of Intelligence, there was not one which did not face a critical housing shortage. In each place, too, overcrowding gave rise to difficult problems and impaired the morale and efficiency of workers.

The situation in Detroit was discussed in Intelligence Report #37. The September survey revealed that families with children face almost insurmountable difficulties in finding living quarters in Detroit. The few places that will accept children are clustered in the poorest, most depressed part of the city, so that many incoming workers are inclined to leave their families behind them.

Inadequate transportation facilities add to the difficulty of life in Detroit. Because Detroit has been an automobile town, its transportation system has been undeveloped. Today, with the population of the city swollen, with many workers living long distances from their plants, and with fewer automobiles available, the city's transportation system is strained to the breaking point.

In Massena, New York, where approximately 6,000 workers are employed in newly erected aluminum plants, the interrelation of the housing and transportation problems is conspicuous. Massena does not appear to be as overcrowded as many war production centers because approximately 40 per cent of the aluminum workers have found living quarters in communities from ten to fifty miles away. But the cost of commuting to work, in terms of

time as well as dollars, is high. Workers complain that they have to pay "a day's wage every week" for transportation, and that they must be away from home 12 to 13 hours to work an eight-hour day. Winter weather will intensify the problem. Roads must be kept open with snow plows during almost the entire winter. The County Highway Department is worried because it does not have priorities for the repair and upkeep of its plows.

In Seattle, Washington, approximately 2,500 FHA and FPHA dwellings are going up which are not yet bought and will be available for home seekers when completed. But the Homes Registration Office, which is in touch with only part of those needing living quarters, has an active file of 3,400 families, and approximately 300 additional families make application to it each week. It is relatively easy to buy a house in Seattle, but so hard to rent accommodations of any sort that the enforcement of rent ceilings is extremely difficult: many consumers are inclined to take what they can get, pay whatever is asked, and keep their mouths shut. Opposition to rent control by apartment house operators is organized and intense.

In these war production centers, and most others, a certain amount of public and private building is going forward. But needs have expanded so tremendously and so rapidly that it would be difficult to provide for them in a short period of time under ideal circumstances. The task appears insuperable under present conditions because of the time required for surveys and for planning, the rapidity with which the situation changes, the opposition of vested interests, and the difficulty of getting construction materials. Resolution and speed are clearly needed in dealing with these obstacles. In addition, there must be well-planned and continuous informational efforts designed to reduce tension, to promote local cooperation

and to make people realize the necessity of suffering inconveniences and making sacrifices in order to win the war.

(These findings are based on preliminary results of a study of housing problems made by the Bureau of Intelligence for the NHA. Copies will be available in the near future to authorized individuals.)

Scrap Collection Complaints

Field representatives of the Office of Public Inquiry report a rising tide of criticism of the scrap collection programs. There is a widespread belief that junk dealers are profiteering. People complain that the rubber they were so urgently requested to contribute is being permitted to rot in the sun. The sight of huge and apparently unchanging graveyards of scrap make them wonder if anything is ever done with the material they gather together. They protest that they were first told to save paper and are now given to understand that paper is plentiful and that what they have saved is of little value.

Frequent complaints are also encountered about vagueness or inconsistencies in the instructions for the collection of scrap or the reasons given for collecting it. In some places, for example, people have been told that tin cans are good for steel, only to learn later that this is not so. One or two columnists and business publications have bitterly attacked the arrangement under which the WPB permitted brewers and bottlers to keep a certain percentage of the tin cans they collect as a payment for their service in collecting them.

Many of these criticisms, while apparently justified, have little real validity. Unlike the steel companies, whose role in utilizing scrap

is very favorably regarded, the junk dealers are mostly small operators, and there is little danger of their getting rich quick from their profits in connection with the salvage program.

Scrap rubber is not, in fact, "rotting in the sun." WPB salvage authorities state that although it may crack and appear to deteriorate in the sunlight, for purposes of reclaiming it remains good for a period of not less than 20 years. Piles of scrap rubber dwindle as slowly as they do, not because the scrap is not needed, but because with our present limited reclaiming capacity it will take a number of months to process the rubber collected during the recent campaign.

Some of the criticisms of the scrap collection program unquestionably emanate from sources eager to find something to attack. Others may be the rationalizations of apathetic people who want to find some excuse for not participating in the salvage campaigns. But most of the criticism, whether justified or not, comes from people who are honestly puzzled by what appear to be inconsistencies and inefficiencies in connection with scrap collection. Efforts to reduce the volume of such criticism are clearly necessary.

There appears to be a need for better coordination at the federal level of the various agencies concerned with salvage. Informational efforts are indicated to clarify the scrap program. The role of the dealer, for example, has to be explained. And people have to be told not only what they are supposed to do, but why they are asked to do it, and what happens to the material they sell or contribute after it leaves their hands.

ENEMY PROPAGANDA

Chain Letter Propaganda in the U. S.

Radio Debunk, the Nazi station which claims to broadcast from within the United States, has long resorted to more novel ways of spreading propaganda. Recognizing that the audience for Nazi broadcasts in the United States is small, it attempts to use this audience as a means of gaining a much larger one. Thus much of its propaganda is broadcast in the form of allegedly true anecdotes, — brief, sensational, and more easily and safely circulated by rumor than ordinary propaganda.

This week Debunk tries a new technique, the "chain letter." Four American girls were said to have gotten together secretly to put a letter into circulation protesting that Communists and Jews were responsible for American entry into the war. Attempting to counter the effects of the President's speech to the International Students Conference, the letter goes on to say that the future of youth is being destroyed by our participation in the war. Special appeal is made to women, girls and boys to start similar letters. An anti-semitic text is recommended.

Divide and Conquer - Anglo-American versus Russia

Churchill's recent review of the war before the House of Commons plus quotations from Russian and British papers furnish the basis for an intensification of Axis attempts to heighten the alleged conflict between the Anglo-Americans and the Russians. The Russians are portrayed as hightly dissatisfied with the lack of a second front, and critical of their Allies. In addition to the discussions of this conflict in broadcasts to England

and the United States, these arguments are emphasized in broadcasts to Latin America.

The latest Nazi allegation (broadcast to the world) is: "Washington political and military circles are now presenting the view, in connection with Moscow's repeated demands for the erection of a so-called 'second front' that the U. S. and Britain would most likely be able to carry out such a plan....only in the coming Spring of 1943..."

The German Home Front

Striving to eliminate those "humanitarian" traits among the German people of which Goebbels complained a few days ago, Nazi terror propaganda reaches unprecedented heights this week. Nazi propagandists, including Dr. Otto Krieg, political theorist, heavily document the oft-stated theme that a German defeat would mean "extirpation of the German people." They allege in several broadcasts that the newspaper, Vrij Nederland (Free Dutch) presented the official British view that, in the event of an allied victory, all German children aged 2 to 6 should be sent out of Germany for 25 years. The dissemination of this proposal by Reuters is proof of its official character, claim the Nazis.

The sterilization plan of "the Jew, Kaufman," is again being extensively used in Nazi internal propaganda. To make it official, Kaufman is presented as "one of the closest collaborators of President Roosevelt." These "monstrous disclosures" are said to "completely coincide with the declaration made by...Secretary Knox..." whose Kansas City speech is misquoted as follows: "a peace will be imposed in which Germany and the Axis powers will be completely eliminated."

Recent Japanese Propaganda

Japanese broadcasters use the "bombing" of Oregon in much the same manner as they used the "shellings" of the California coast and Vancouver. The American people are told of the "tremendous shock" they received and of the "frantic strengthening" of coastal defenses. This time the Japanese can point to their previous "accomplishments" on the American West Coast and claim control of the Pacific.

Japanese propagandists now claim that the validity of their military reporting has been upheld by the delayed American announcement of the sinking of the Yorktown. Together with other Axis powers they remind Americans that they announced this sinking "after the Battle of Midway."

PSF

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

October 1, 1942

My dear Miss Tully:

I am enclosing a copy of an INTELLIGENCE REPORT on "Rumors in Wartime" which was prepared for the Director of the Office of War Information.

Sincerely yours,

R. Keith Kane
Chief, Bureau of Intelligence

Miss Grace Tully
Secretary
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

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INTELLIGENCE REPORT

RUMORS IN WARTIME

CONFIDENTIAL

This document contains information relating to the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, as amended, U. S. Code 50, Sections 31 and 32. Its transmission or communication in any manner to any unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

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Such recommendations and suggestions as may appear in this report have not been cleared in advance with the Director of the Office of War Information and do not necessarily reflect his views or those of the Office of War Information. Recommendations and suggestions, if they do appear, are only submitted by individuals in the Bureau of Intelligence who have assembled the data and they are offered for the consideration of appropriate authorities.

The Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of War Information uses a variety of procedures and techniques to obtain its data on the attitudes of people and on what is brought to their attention. These procedures and techniques have been found reliable after extensive experimentation over a period of years.

THE REPORT IN BRIEF

Elements of Rumor

Rumors develop out of situations in which information is inadequate to satisfy public interest. People tend to invent and circulate explanations which reflect their individual emotional biases.

Rumors may be classified, therefore, on the basis of their psychological motivation: Hostility rumors are those which give expression to prejudices and animosities. Anxiety rumors are those which reflect underlying uneasiness and fear. Escape rumors are those which tend to deny reality and minimize problems on a wishful basis.

In a nation at war, the conditions which promote rumor are intensified. The focus of public interest is sharper and more homogeneous, while censorship clogs the formal channels of information. Wartime dislocations foster frustrations and fears.

Effects of Rumor

Rumors have a contagious influence, spreading the emotional weaknesses they reflect. Hostility rumors act to disrupt national unity, widening cleavages between elements of the population. Anxiety rumors promote defeatism and dismay. Escape rumors encourage complacency.

For this reason, enemy propaganda gives impetus, if not inspiration, to rumor-mongering. Many current rumors are paralleled by Axis radio broadcasts.

Conclusions

The danger of rumors lies, not, as popularly believed, in the information which they may give to the enemy, but in the misinformation they disseminate among the American people. Official denials provide an inadequate means of combatting them. Such underlying psychological factors as tension and prejudice cannot be removed through direct negation. Positive information, designed to overcome the tension and prejudice, affords a more effective means of minimizing rumor.

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"Most earnestly I urge my countrymen to reject all rumors." -- President Roosevelt, December 9, 1941.

RUMORS IN WARTIME

Rumor is one of the foundations of normal social intercourse. It is a part of the stock-in-trade of everyday conversation. All men spread rumors -- more or less guardedly, more or less innocently and innocuously. The wider their social contacts, the more likely they are to hear rumors and to repeat them. For men do not confine their conversation to verifiable fact. Whenever they relate any proposition represented as fact rather than as personal opinion, yet not verified by common knowledge or recognized authority, they contribute to the spread of rumor.

Rumors are responses to a felt need for communication in an atmosphere of uncertainty or inadequate knowledge. They move with the speed of sound. Unlike sound, however, they are magnified by distance -- amplified and distorted by the human instruments which transmit them.

THE ELEMENTS OF RUMOR

About the middle of March, the steamship Queen Mary put into the harbor of Boston. Her arrival, stay and departure were not mentioned by newspapers or other media of information. But since she was plainly in view, news about her spread by word of mouth and became common knowledge

throughout the city.

During the following fortnight, a number of rumors about the Queen Mary attained wide circulation in Boston. The case of the Lafayette (Normandie) gave rise to tales of her destruction:

(1) She had been sabotaged at her dock.
(2) She had been set afire.
(3) She was loading ammunition and had exploded.

Other rumors related to her crew:

(1) She was manned by Negro sailors.
(2) All her officers were Jews.
(3) None of her officers or sailors was Jewish.

Some two weeks after her arrival, she set forth in broad daylight. Her departure roughly coincided with the first city-wide blackout of Boston, giving rise to the story that the blackout had been arranged for the express purpose of permitting the Queen Mary to slip out of the harbor unobserved.

In the week following her departure, a good many rumors appeared:

(1) She was carrying 15,000, 20,000, 50,000 troops.
(2) She was heavily loaded with ammunition, carried almost no troops.
(3) All of the troops loaded in Boston were Negroes.
(4) Negro troops had to be driven aboard the Queen Mary before she left. They mutinied and white troops had to be called in.
(5) As the Queen Mary left, troops aboard broke into a song, the words of which were "We are going to get Hitler and when we get back we are going to get the Jews."
(6) She set sail for England, Ireland, Iceland, Africa, the Near East, Australia.
(7) She had been sunk with all lives lost.

Here was a situation in which rumors were bound to germinate. The Queen Mary was naturally an object of keen public interest. In the absence

of adequate information to satisfy interest, the unheralded arrival of the ship precipitated a welter of conjectures.

Although the conjectures sprang from a common stimulus, they showed wide variety. Plainly the nature of the conjectures was a product of the differing psychological attitudes upon which the stimulus acted.

The creation and transmission of rumor is a selective process. People do not repeat all that they hear; they choose for repetition those topics which meet their own interests and satisfy their own emotional impulses. Along with this process of selection, there goes a distortion in accordance with the individual psychological bent of the rumor-relator.

EMOTIONAL BACKGROUNDS OF RUMOR

It is possible to classify rumors broadly on the basis of the emotions which they reflect. For the sake of simplification, an attempt has been made to do this among the great number of rumors studied by the Bureau of Intelligence. Classification is not always indisputably clear. The same story, when told by different individuals, may reflect different impulses. Roughly, rumors may be divided into three basic categories, reflective of their psychological motivation: hostility, anxiety and escape.

Hostility

Rumors provide a ready mode of expression for the animosities men feel toward particular groups or individuals. Rumors of this type range all the way from generalized expressions of antipathy or contempt to detailed anecdotes depicting the despised subject in an unfavorable light. The important point to note here is that these rumors reflect, rather than create, prejudice.

Such rumors are common enough, even in normal times. Among a people at war, they increase both in frequency and intensity. Today they are generally reflective of anti-Government, anti-British, anti-Russian, anti-labor, anti-Semitic, anti-Negro and anti-alien sentiments.

Among the rumors circulated in Boston about the Queen Mary, the story that the troops aboard her broke into a song suggesting that they were "going to get the Jews" on their return provides an obvious illustration of the hostility rumor type. Boston provides a milieu in which the expression of anti-Semitism can be favorably received. The Queen Mary furnished nothing more than a peg on which to hang the prejudice. Hostility toward Jews was the real breeding ground of this particular rumor.

Some other samples of hostility rumors may serve to clarify the point that these are determined more by the emotional character of the rumor-relator than by the nature of the stimulating circumstance:

> There is so much red-tape connected with the Government that the new lumber used at Remington for temporary sheds and buildings is just piled up and burned when they are through with it, instead of allowing it to be used some place or sold to the public. (Salt Lake City, Utah)
>
> The soldiers are a no-good lot -- they go around seducing the local girls. (New Brunswick, N. J.)
>
> The shipyard workers get paid for checking in and not doing any work. (Portland, Maine)
>
> England is just trying to get all our boys trapped in Britain where they will be slaughtered and then England and Germany will gang up against the United States. (Oregon)

The effect of rumors of this type is to promote internal division, to disturb national unity. From the point of view of their consequences, they

are wedge-driving rumors. They separate group from group within the population, aggravate and exaggerate existing cleavages.

Anxiety

The fears to which individuals are subject also find a natural expression in rumors. People are prone to invent or repeat tales which reflect their own uneasiness or maladjustment. These rumors take different forms. Their specific content does not necessarily reflect the particular fear disturbing the individual; it reflects only anxiety in general.

The rumors concerning the Queen Mary which suggest that she was sabotaged, had exploded or had sunk with all lives lost seem to reflect apprehension in the narrators. While the presence of the Queen Mary stimulated hostility rumors in the minds of persons overloaded with prejudice, the same precipitating event provoked others to expressions of anxiety.

Wartime conditions multiply the fears to which people are normally subject. Many of the current anxiety rumors are concerned with military or naval affairs, betraying anxiety about persons in the armed services. Here are some additional illustrations of the type:

> They say that during maneuvers the night of the wind storm they made the boys practice using life boats and 60 of them were left in the ocean. (Norfolk, Va.)
>
> The accident rate in the shipyards is terrible, up to 100 deaths a week. (Portland, Maine)
>
> Isn't it true that the Government will be so heavily in debt that they will have to take the bonds as taxes or else just won't try to pay them? (Iowa)

This type of rumor, too, has an unhealthy effect upon the community. It serves to spread the fear which it reflects. Despair and defeatism grow out of rumors of this character.

Escape

Certain rumors reflect a natural human tendency to escape from reality or to distort situations by viewing them through rose-colored glasses. Unlike the anxiety rumors, which distort in the direction of exaggeration, escape rumors tend to deny the existence of problems or to dismiss them as trivial.

These appear to be somewhat less frequent than the other types. The stories about the Queen Mary suggesting that she carried great numbers of troops were perhaps reflective of wishful thinking. Other rumors illustrative of this emotional impulse are:

> Warehouses are full of sugar, so why should it be rationed. (Minnesota)
>
> Lloyds of London is betting that the war will be over in 1942. (Missouri)
>
> In spite of gasoline rationing in Georgia there are numbers of tank trucks at the pipe-line outlet in north Georgia which daily load up and carry gasoline into unrationed Tennessee and Alabama. (Atlanta, Ga.)

The danger of the escape rumor lies in its promotion of complacency. Insofar as rumors of this type encourage people to believe that all is going well, they undermine determination and relax the intensity of effort requisite for the effective prosecution of the war.

In many rumors the emotional coloration seems less clear and more difficult to catalog. Uncertainty and curiosity often find expression in rumors which apparently constitute pure conjecture. In the absence of real facts, people tend to invent answers to the questions which perplex them. Frequently these inventions spring from a reluctance to admit ignorance, a desire to seem "in the know." The effect of such rumors, however

innocent their intent, is to sow misapprehension and confusion.

INTENSIFICATION OF RUMOR IN WARTIME

In a nation at war, all of the conditions likely to promote the spread of rumor are intensified. There is a much more homogeneous focus of public interest than at normal times. People are subject to intense hopes and fears about the progress of events. But these events are necessarily subject to wartime censorship so that the channels of information are less free than ordinarily, and naturally inadequate to the popular desire for news.

The societal dislocations engendered by war also foster the spread of rumors. Great masses of men are brought together in Army camps, industrial workers flock in unprecedented numbers to war production centers. All of these people, confronted with novel circumstances and unfamiliar surroundings, shut off from their customary associations and avenues of communication, are peculiarly prone to a variety of speculative rumors about the subject in which they are most interested -- the progress of the war.

During the course of any war, there are long periods in which men do not feel that they are actively participating in the conflict. Soldiers engage in training the usefulness of which is not always clear to them. Many civilians, similarly deprived of any sense of effective contribution to the war effort, tend to become bored and restive. Such a situation quickens the development of rumors.

In order to study the nature, origin and effect of rumors in wartime, the Bureau of Intelligence conducted an experimental study in two cities -- New Brunswick, N. J., and Portland, Maine. The study was exploratory in character, designed to determine the feasibility of interviewing

techniques for the analysis of rumors. Although only tentative conclusions can be drawn from the results, the study does shed light on the incidence of rumor and the patterns in which it develops. In addition, the Bureau analyzed some 3,200 rumors reported to it from all parts of the country by its correspondence panels, by the 31 field offices of the Bureau of Public Inquiry and by 150 offices of the Federal Security Agency.

RUMOR INCIDENCE IN TWO CITIES

The two cities selected for intensive study by the Bureau of Intelligence are seaboard communities, roughly equivalent in size, similar in their economic relation to metropolitan centers, largely engaged in the production of war goods and vitally affected by specific military and naval developments. Yet they are sufficiently separated geographically to avoid the same local idiosyncrasies. The differences between the cities are reflected in the differences between the content of rumors prevalent in each of them.

New Brunswick is the site of a new Army staging area, Camp Kilmer. This camp, large enough to house a population nearly double the size of New Brunswick, was completed late this spring. Interest in the project has been high among the townspeople. Soldiers on "town leave," jeeps, military police, the increase in population and the attendant expansion of business have all served to make this city intensely "soldier conscious."

In Portland are concentrated the activities of two major shipbuilding companies, employing over 27,000 men. Portland's harbor is the scene of intense activity. The city's population has been greatly increased and business has boomed as a result of the influx of new workers with their

families. Portland, in consequence, is a community which may be described as intensely "shipbuilding conscious."

Rumors had different foci in the two cities. In New Brunswick, they centered around Army life, the behavior of the soldiers and military affairs. In Portland, however, the rumors clustered around topics relating to the shipyards — the high wages of workers, high accident rates in the yards and the amount and kind of work done. But, despite the differences in stimuli and content, the basic motivations of the rumors remained similar.

In both communities, the amount of news appearing in local newspapers relating to the new centers of popular interest was very small. An analysis of the Daily Home News of New Brunswick for the week of July 26 - August 2 disclosed that little news was published concerning activities in the camp itself or concerning such natural topics of gossip as soldiers' leaves, troop movements or the relations between enlisted men and local girls. Almost no shipyard news appears in the Portland Press Herald, save the sport page accounts of shipyard baseball games. An examination of this paper during the week of July 26 - August 2 showed that no shipyard accidents were recorded and no accounts involving people described as "shipyard workers."

This absence of information adequate to allay groundless speculation provides an ideal atmosphere for the generation of rumor. But it cannot of itself be held responsible for rumor creation. The atmosphere in these communities is charged with the tensions in which rumors germinate. Shipyard workers and soldiers alike descend by the bus-load upon the cities' busiest corners; they crowd the moving picture theaters, create waiting

lines in restaurants, wander aimlessly about the streets at night, jostle each other and anyone else who happens to be around. They have few friends and no local attachments. They dislocate the normal life of the communities, causing irritations and animosities. Interest in them is heightened by the uneasiness which they create.

Deep-seated, latent prejudices are brought to the surface, moreover, by the very presence of these newcomers in the community. The Portlander's traditional sense of thrift and hard work is violated by his notions of the shipyard workers' high wages and easy jobs. To the New Brunswickian, the man in uniform who whistles at a girl on the street calls up the traditional stereotype of the lustful soldier who takes his fun where he finds it.

In these two cities, interviews were conducted with 172 persons by half a dozen trained interviewers during a two week period beginning August 23. That rumors were prevalent is indicated by the fact that 1,283 of them were recorded. There were 456 different rumors, of which 304 were reported only once. Of the 152 that were reported more than once, the average number of repetitions was 6.4. Fifteen rumors were reported 16 times or oftener.

The interviews were extremely lengthy, ranging from one to four hours. Although no formal questionnaire was used, every person interviewed was given an opportunity to express himself upon the following topics: rationing, defense production, the wartime role of minorities, spies and sabotage, military strategy, wartime Washington, submarine and naval action, atrocity stories and other topics of purely local interest. At a suitable point early in each interview, the purpose of the questioning was explained with varying elaboration, depending upon the sophistication of the respondent.

FACTORS IN THE SPREAD OF RUMOR

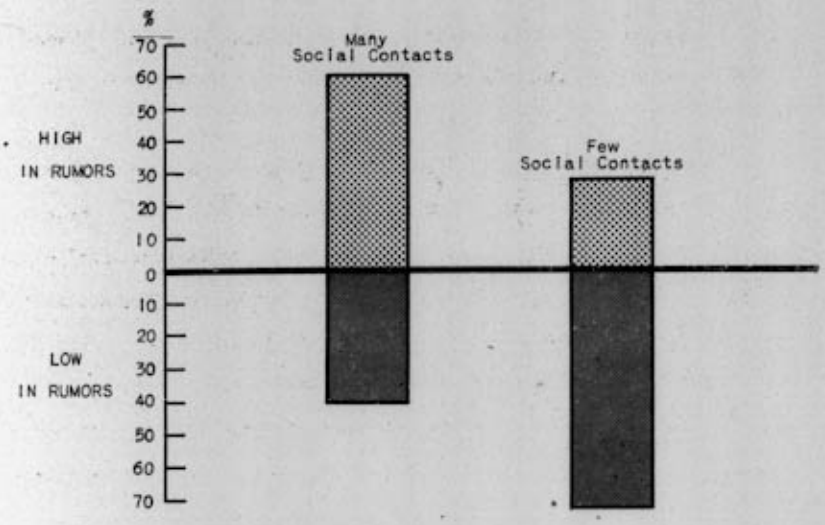
On the basis of the whole conversation, interviewers rated each of the persons with whom they talked as to their main focus of interest in the war, their degree of satisfaction with news, their level of information, their degree of identification with the war effort, their prejudices and the degree of social participation in which they engaged. Although the size of the sample and the imperfection of the techniques employed forbid conclusive generalizations, the data suggest four hypotheses as to the factors which facilitate the spread of rumors.

1. The people who were rated as well-informed showed a greater tendency to recount rumors than did the persons rated ill-informed. One obvious reason for the higher incidence of rumor among better-informed people lies in the fact that these people have greater verbal facility, are more articulate. It is a fact, moreover, that people who are well-informed about certain phases of the war are likely to have a higher degree of interest in these phases. This higher incidence of rumor among the better informed does not necessarily indicate, however, that they are more affected by rumors than the less informed; they are less dependent upon rumor for their information and better able to overcome or counteract a rumor's impact.

2. Rumor incidence is higher in people who participate widely in society than among the socially isolated. Obviously, social interaction provides an opportunity for rumor-mongering. It is natural, therefore, that working women should be more prone to the retailing of rumors than are housewives. All persons who see a great many people daily and see them under circumstances of considerable intimacy are much more liable to

hear and to repeat rumors than the persons whose lives are comparatively secluded. The chart below illustrates the greater frequency with which rumors are mentioned by socially active persons.

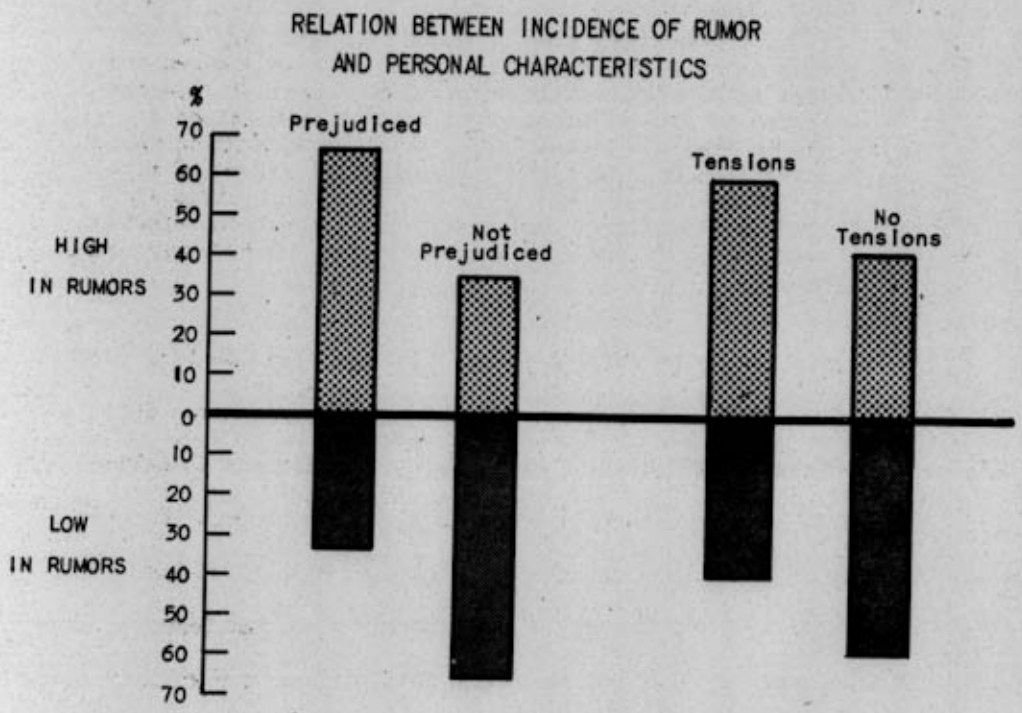
RELATION BETWEEN INCIDENCE OF RUMORS
AND SOCIAL INTERACTION



3. Prejudice appears to be a fertile breeding ground of rumor. People whom the interviewers rated as being high in prejudice were twice as prone to mention rumors frequently as were those rated as unprejudiced.

4. A similar relationship exists between emotional tensions and the incidence of rumors. People who were regarded by the interviewers as emotionally tense were considerably more prone than those not subject to tension to repeat rumors. The relationship between rumor-mongering and these

characteristics is illustrated in the following chart.



BELIEF IN RUMORS

Interviewers in New Brunswick and Portland estimated that over 70 per cent of the rumors mentioned to them were believed by the people who related them. Belief in rumors is, of course, a matter of degree. Since the selection of any particular rumor depends, in part, upon an emotional predisposition toward acceptance of it, some measure of belief may be indicated by the mere recounting of a rumor; people do not tell stories which they know to be nonsensical.

Constant repetition of rumors may, moreover, help to induce belief.

The point is illustrated in the following self-analysis offered by a person interviewed in New Brunswick:

> "I have heard many stories about Jews and they get me very angry -- that Jews are trying to get deferred and were using all possible excuses; that many of them are trying to get defense work or special commissions in places like the Signal Corps, or other work which would defer them from the actual fighting. A friend of mine on the draft board has even told me of such cases and occasionally I even find myself believing these stories even though I know very well that they are probably not true."

In general, it may be said of rumors that they tend to find acceptance whenever they are related, however distantly, to some known facts and whenever they present a proposition which the hearer desires to believe.

Certain factors operate to check credulity with respect to rumor. People commonly reject rumors which are in conflict with first-hand information. For example, a cab driver in New Brunswick, who had heard a story about a fight between a local policeman and an M.P. from Camp Kilmer, said: "...just a story, that's all it is. I seen him and he's still on duty."

Rumors are rarely believed when they run counter to a firmly established belief. A USO worker remarked, "Many of my friends say 'Roosevelt is a dictator and is using the war to build up his political machine.' Of course, I am strongly New Deal and that is just a lot of nonsense with no basis."

Sometimes a simple sense of realism makes a rumor seem incredible. A doctor in Portland told laughingly about the submarine stories he had heard. "They have those subs," he said, "cruising around in about four feet of water."

RUMORS AND AXIS PROPAGANDA

Close and striking parallels exist between current rumors and the content of Axis propaganda broadcasts. The origin of any single rumor is difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine. And there is no conclusive evidence to prove that rumors circulating in America had enemy inspiration. There can be no doubt, however, that a great many of them serve the enemy cause.

Whether or not they originated the rumors, Axis propagandists sedulously foster their dissemination. One out of five of all of the rumors reported in Portland and New Brunswick -- including those rumors which were of a purely local character -- have been repeated over the Nazi short-wave station, Debunk. Among hostility and anxiety rumors, the percentage of coincidence is much higher.

One or two examples will suffice to illustrate the parallelism between rumors and enemy propaganda:

RUMOR	PROPAGANDA
Minnesota: "Roosevelt has a lot of Jew advisors around and they are telling him what to do."	Radio DEBUNK, April 6: "But would you have reelected FDR a third time if he had honestly told you what he and his Jew crowd of advisors were up to?"
Arkansas: "They told me that they are going to have 750 Negro cadets stationed at this school, and that white men are going to do the menial jobs. There will be plenty of trouble if that is the case. I hear that they have been having race riots down at Montgomery, Alabama, and that they have had to shoot a bunch of Niggers."	Radio ROME, to North America, July 29, 1942: "LISBON: The United States War Department communicates that 769, I will repeat the figure, 769 Negro cadets have been admitted to an American Officers Training School."

Illinois: "Trouble between the United States soldiers and British soldiers is commonplace."	Radio DEBUNK, June 18: "American doughboys in Iceland staged a short but heated battle with British soldiers there but came out on top. Our boys had one casualty, whereas the Limeys suffered two dead and three wounded. The British soldiers had called our soldiers cowards for not starting an offensive."

In the waging of psychological warfare, Axis propagandists have consistently played upon the known weaknesses of those whom they attack. They have been content to widen existing cleavages, to compound confusion, to magnify alarm. In their attacks upon the United States, the aims of our enemies have been to undermine the confidence of Americans in their Government, to foster discord between minority elements in our population, to enhance confusion and dismay — in short, to divert our attention from the real issues confronting us.

Whatever the origin of rumors, their effects have been to promote these enemy purposes. It is in these effects that the real dangers of rumor-mongering lie. Informational campaigns have consistently stressed the thesis that loose talk may endanger the lives of American soldiers and sailors. The internal corrosive influence of loose talk in the form of rumors has been largely ignored. Yet the real menace they represent lies, not so much in the information they give to the enemy, as in the misinformation they give to the American people.

CONCLUSIONS

The nature and prevalence of rumors provide an index to the morale of a people. Results of this preliminary investigation show the existence

in America of widespread elements of disunity, anxiety, complacency and confusion.

The effect of rumors is to aggravate the weaknesses which they disclose. And it is to this end that Axis propagandists consciously give impetus, if not inspiration, to the spread of rumors in the United States. To the extent that people depend upon rumor for their knowledge and beliefs, their confidence in the formal system of communication is undermined. Their faith in authoritative sources, and, consequently, in the Government itself, is decreased.

Rumors within a community grow most easily in situations where people are confronted by new and unexplained problems. Their spread is accelerated by the frictions and frustrations which develop out of wartime dislocations. The very hostility, anxiety and desire for escape which rumors reflect constitute their primary sources.

The high incidence of rumor among well informed people affords a means of combatting the rumor danger. Because of their literacy, these people are accessible to anti-rumor campaigns designed to enlist their cooperation. They need to be shown that the damaging effects of rumor-mongering lie, not so much in its disclosure of information to the enemy, as in its divisive and disconcerting impact on the home front.

Rumor denial, while of some value in combatting rumors of a local nature, seems an inadequate means of meeting the problem as a whole. Such underlying psychological factors as tension and prejudice cannot be removed through direct negation. Positive information designed to overcome the tension and prejudice stands a better chance of minimizing rumor than authoritative rebuttals of the rumors themselves.

Local campaigns to counteract rumors have a limited usefulness. There is danger that they may, if carelessly directed, spread the rumors which they seek to scotch. They need careful supervision and coordination with federal policy.

The large number of rumors of morale-lowering potentialities in circulation suggests the importance of a continuing study of the problem. There is need for investigation of the incidence of rumor on a national basis, for a study of the effects of the more dangerous rumors and for further analysis of the psychological factors which motivate rumor-mongering.

SOURCES OF THE REPORT

This report is based on the following material:

"Wartime Rumors in Two Eastern Cities," division of Surveys, Special Report #21
Appendix: A List of Rumors Compiled in Connection with Special Report #21
Rumor Report, Special Services Division

The Division of Surveys reports are available to authorized individuals through the Bureau of Intelligence of the Office of War Information.